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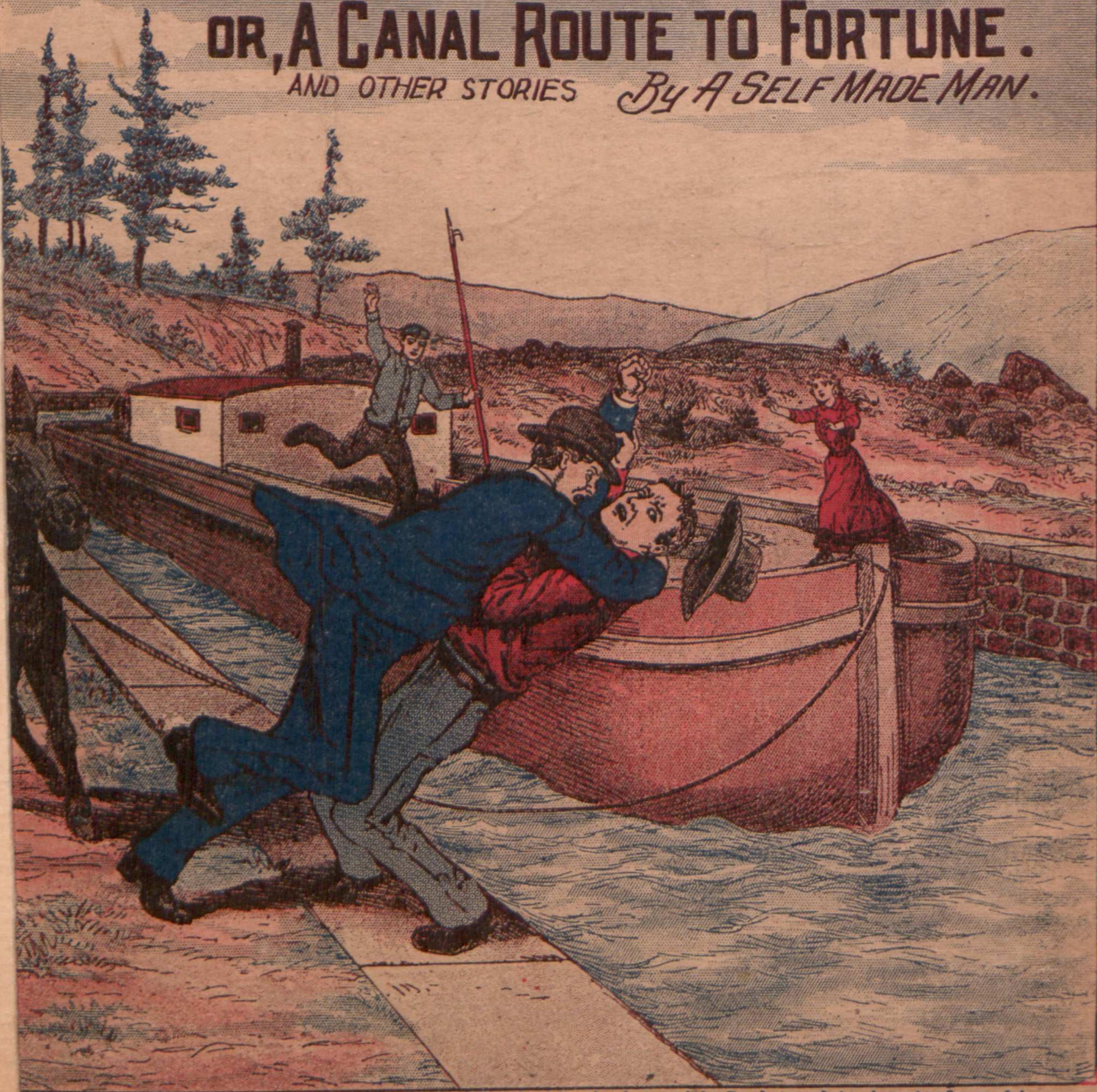
AME ^A N D FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF
BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

JACK JASPER'S VENTURE ; OR, A CANAL ROUTE TO FORTUNE.

AND OTHER STORIES

By A SELF MADE MAN.



"*Bl* you, you young viper!" hissed Dave Wambold, closing with Jack, and trying to force him into the canal. Millie uttered a shrill scream, which attracted her brother's notice.

"*Bl* grabbed a boathook and ran forward to Jack's assistance.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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JACK JASPER'S VENTURE

—OR—

A CANAL ROUTE TO FORTUNE

By A SELF-MADE MAN.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCES JACK JASPER AND HIS FRIEND BEN BURLING.

"Missed again, Ben," laughed Jack Jasper, as the smoke from the muzzle of Ben Burling's shotgun floated away and the water-fowl he had shot at winged its low flight across the Camden marshes.

"By gum! I don't know what's the matter with this old gun. It seems to be goin' back on me," replied Ben, in a vexed tone.

"It isn't the fault of the gun. You looked crooked, that's all," chuckled Jack.

"How could I look crooked? No, it's the blamed gun, I tell you. I never missed twice in succession before in the whole course of my life."

Ben looked critically at his weapon, but he couldn't find out where the fault, if any, lay; nevertheless, nothing could convince him that his failure to hit the water-fowl was due to any want of skill on his part.

Jack Jasper and Ben Burling were both residents of Camden, a small town which was situated on the north border of the marsh that extended for some distance around the neighborhood.

Jack was about eighteen, and lived with his widowed mother and a sister in a small cottage on the suburbs of the town, and close to the water course of an old disused canal filled by water diverted from the Salmon River.

This canal circled around the edge of the marsh and skirted a part of the town.

Once on a time canal boats came down the Salmon River from Centerport, a flourishing manufacturing town, entered the canal at Camden, passed through the artificial waterway, and dumped freight and even passengers at Jordan, a town on the west shore of Lake Cadillac, whence they were taken across in a small steamer to Eastlake, on the opposite shore.

But the building of a railroad which took in Centerport knocked the business of the canal boat company into a cocked hat.

East-bound freight and passengers were carried a much longer way around, it is true, but the iron road made quicker time, though the cost of carriage was higher than the old canal boat rates.

As time is money in a majority of cases, shippers naturally preferred the railroad to the slow-going water route, so the canal transportation company went out of business and abandoned their boats and the canal itself to the ravages of time and neglect.

Ben Burling was a young man of twenty-five years of age, and a particular friend of Jasper's.

He had a sister named Millie, who was an uncommonly smart girl.

Jack and Ben had been employed until lately in a small furniture factory, Ben as engineer, and Jack as fireman; but the closing down of the works on account of the failure of the company threw them out of work.

With plenty of time on their hands, they had gone shooting on the Camden marsh, a favorite amusement of theirs, on the day we introduce them to our readers, and had already bagged a fair supply of game.

"I guess it's time we started for home," said Jack, taking a look at the sun, which was low down in the sky.

"I reckon you're right, Jack. We don't want to be caught on the marsh in the dark, and we've got quite a way to go before we can reach the bridge that crosses the canal."

"We've done pretty well," said Jack, glancing into his stuffed game bag. "I've got fodder enough here to fill our larder. We won't need to call on the butcher for several days, and that's quite an item, considering I'm out of a job."

"You're better off than I am, anyway," replied Ben, "for your mother owns her cottage, while I have rent to pay."

"That's right; but the rent you pay won't break you or make the landlord rich."

"Well, six dollars a month is something. If I didn't have it around the first of the month old Grimes would have a face on him as long as a yardstick."

"I shouldn't think that six dollars would worry him much. They say he's very well off. I heard that he holds mortgages on a dozen buildings in Camden, and on one or two outlying farms besides."

"It wouldn't make any difference if he owned the whole of Camden, he'd be just as grasin' as he is now."

"Funny that an old man like him should be reaching out after the dollars, when he's got more now than he can possibly spend if he lived to be a hundred."

"Spend! Why, he doesn't spend anythin'. He just hoards it up. A cent looks bigger to him than a dollar does to you and me, poor as we are."

"I know he's got the reputation of being a miser; but people always exaggerate such stories. I don't believe he's worth half what folks imagine he is. They say he lost a lot of money in the canal company when it went up. That canal was a pet hobby of his, and it broke his heart when the railroad put it out of business. They say he hasn't been exactly right in the head since the failure of the company he helped to finance."

"Don't you worry about his head," said Ben. "I wish I had as shrewd a head on my shoulders. I'll bet I'd soon be worth money."

"What good is money to a person if he doesn't enjoy it? What's the use of piling up gold for somebody else, maybe a distant relative, or even a stranger, to blow in?"

"No good. I always get as good a time as possible out of my little money. A fellow is a long time dead. Sis

won't need it, for she's bound to get some chap to look after her. I consider her a prize package for any likely young man."

"I guess she is. She's a fine little housekeeper."

"None better. She can make a dollar go as far as any woman, and further than most."

While talking together the young sportsmen were picking their way at a good pace across the marsh.

This wouldn't have been an easy matter for one not so well acquainted with the place as they were; but both had the topography of the marsh down fine, having visited it a hundred times or more, and there was little fear of them walking into any treacherous spot.

They could now see the trees that lined the deserted canal in places, and the rising ground beyond.

They could also see an ancient mill, which lifted its gaunt and hoary remains on the edge of the marsh near the bridge which they had to cross to reach the road to Camden.

No one in the county could remember when this mill was in operation, nor was there any record of the date when it was erected.

There was a tradition that the miller had hanged himself to one of the rafters, and on the strength of that legend the old place was said to be haunted.

Whether it was or not few people had the opportunity to find out anything on the subject, though it is true that two or three farmers, passing that way late at night, asserted that they had seen a ghostly kind of light in one of the windows.

As on each of these occasions the farmers were known to have gone home boozy from a tavern on the outskirts of Camden, and might reasonably be supposed to have been in that condition when they passed along the road opposite the old mill, their stories met with little credence.

It was quite possible they might have seen the flash of a match as some tramp who had sought shelter in the mill lighted his pipe, but as for ghostly lights at the mill or anywhere else, the community did not take any stock in them.

The sun disappeared entirely as Jack and Ben got within a hundred feet of the mill.

They took to the dried bed of a stream that had at some ancient date flowed that way from the Salmon River and lost itself in the marsh.

It was this stream which had furnished power to the mill, and no doubt the drying up of it had put the mill out of business.

No one living in that locality, and there were some old inhabitants, could recollect when that waterway was not just as it looked now.

Now that they were out of the marsh and near the bridge, Jack and Ben didn't care how soon it got dark, for they were not much over a mile from town.

"Come, step out, Jack. I'm feelin' as hungry as a hunter, and I'm thinkin' I can't get outside a brace of these birds, cooked as only Millie can cook them, any too soon," said Ben.

Unfortunately in stepping out, Jack's weight came on a round stone, which slipped aside, and his ankle turned under him.

Down he went with a cry of pain, and, what was worse, he couldn't get up.

"What's the matter, Jack?" asked the surprised Ben.

"The matter is I've sprained my ankle badly, and I can't get on. I'll never be able to walk home. You'll have to carry me to the canal, so that I can bathe it, or it will swell to the size of an elephant's foot inside of half an hour. I know what I'm up against. Prompt attention and cold water is everything at the start of an accident of this kind. If I can keep the swelling down I'll soon get over it, but if I can't I'll be laid up for a week or two," said Jack.

"How in thunder did you do it?"

"Stepped on a stone that seemed lying there with malicious intent to do me up. Come, now, help me up, and support me along. I'll have to hop on one foot."

With a great deal of difficulty Jack was assisted as far as the bank of the canal, and then he had a terrible job trying to get his gum boot off, for the ankle was already badly swollen.

He suffered great pain while Ben, as gently as he could, pulled the boot off.

Removing his stocking, he plunged his foot into the cold water of the canal.

It sent a shock through his body like contact with a pow-

erful galvanic battery, and he had to grit his teeth to avoid uttering a howl.

"Does it hurt?" asked Ben, noticing the expression on his companion's face.

"Hurt! Oh, no, it doesn't hurt at all. It feels lovely," replied Jack in a sarcastic tone. "I wish you were enjoying the same sensation, for misery always likes company."

"Thanks," chuckled Ben, "I'd rather the pleasure were yours."

"Gracious! the water is cold. It puts my teeth on edge."

"You don't expect to find the water warm at this time of the year, do you?"

"Of course not. It ought to cure my sprain in short order. It's about as painful, though, as having one's toes amputated."

"How do you know that? You never had a leg cut off."

"I just said that to give you an idea of my sensations at this moment."

It was rather heroic treatment that Jack forced himself to undergo, for the water was icy cold, and for a time it made the pain in his foot almost unbearable; but Jack grit clear through, and as the swelling went down the pain decreased.

He bound his ankle up with a wet bandage made of his handkerchief, held in place by Ben's handkerchief.

Over this he drew on his stocking and then shoved his leg into his boot.

"It won't do for me to rest my weight on that ankle," he said to Ben. "You must help me as far as the mill and then go and borrow a cart of Farmer Bradley and take me home. By favoring my ankle all I can for a day or two I'll be all right. Had we been somewhere out of reach of water I'd have been in a bad pickle."

Ben assisted Jack into the ground floor of the old mill, where Jasper seated himself on a box which stood under the stairs leading to the second story.

"I'll leave my gun and bag of game here with you," said Ben, "and I'll get back with some kind of a vehicle as soon as I can."

"Yes; don't take any more time than you can help, I'm anxious to get home and doctor my ankle with liniment," replied Jack.

Ben assured him that he would hurry, and then hastened away, leaving Jack to the silence and solitude of the ancient mill.

CHAPTER II.

DESCRIBES WHAT JACK HEARD IN THE OLD MILL.

Twilight was now on the face of the landscape, and the shadows of the ground floor of the old mill, which daylight had banished to the corners, began creeping forth like wild animals from their lairs in the jungle.

It was a lonesome spot at the best, particularly after dark.

"If I was at all nervous I wouldn't like to be obliged to remain in this old rookery after dark," thought Jack. "Thank goodness I'm not affected that way, for they say a person's imagination can go a long way toward making spooks out of nothing at all."

At that moment the silence of the mill was suddenly broken by the sound of slow and heavy footfalls somewhere down under the flooring.

"What's that?" cried Jack, becoming alert all at once. "There is somebody in this mill—down in the cellar where the wreck of the disused machinery lies crumbling away. Who can it be? Some tramp probably who has been snooding there and has just woken up."

The footsteps sounded as if ascending a stairs now, and they came nearer every moment.

Presently he could hear them in a room beyond an open doorway.

Jack fastened his eyes on the door which he could barely make out as a blot on the side wall.

From the darkness surrounding the doorway a human form came forth.

It was a man of ordinary stature, and he walked straight for the outer door, where he paused and looked out for some minutes.

Then he stepped back and struck a match to light a pipe. Jack saw between his teeth.

The flare of the match showed a smoothly shaven face and bushy eyebrows.

It also disclosed the fact that the man was commonly dressed.

He did not look at all like a hobo, and Jack wondered what he was doing in the building.

The man stretched himself and yawned as if he had been indulging in a sleep in the depths below.

Then he proceeded to walk up and down the room, apparently ruminating, while the smoke curled about his head and lost itself in the air.

Every time he came to the outer door he would pause and took out, after which he resumed his stride.

The boy got the idea from his movements that he was expecting somebody.

At that moment Jasper caught the faint sound of footsteps on the bridge.

"I wonder if that's Ben, or is it the person this man seems to be waiting for? It's a little too soon for Ben to be back, I think."

All doubt on the matter was dissipated by the appearance of an average built man in the doorway with a grip.

"That you, Wambold?" asked the man with the pipe, advancing to meet the newcomer.

"Of course it's me. Who else would come here at this hour, or any other time, for that matter?" was the reply.

"Did you bring my grub?"

"Of course I did. Do you s'pose I'd forget you?"

"I should hope not, for there's nothin' left below but a package of crackers, and that wouldn't go far on a hungry man's stomach."

"Been working all day, I s'pose?" said Wambold.

"Up to about two. Then I lay down and took a sleep. Only woke up about ten minutes ago."

"How is the second plate getting on?"

"It's nearly finished.

"Well, it's time we looked around for the necessary coin to buy the press and other things we need for turning out a first-class imitation of the new treasury \$20 note."

"Where are we goin' to get the stuff?"

"Take it from somebody who has a superabundance of the article."

"Rob him, you mean?"

"That's what the world calls it," chuckled Wambold.

"That's risky."

"So is this business we're engaged in; but the promised results of our enterprise largely overbalance the risk involved."

"Yes, as far as the plates go they will be a perfect facsimile of the ones the government uses to turn out the new notes. I'll guarantee that. If the paper and printing are equally good we ought to get rich on the rapid plan."

"You needn't worry about the paper, Spangler. The government is doing that now over the unexplained disappearance of a case of it. The case will get here in due time. All that bothers me now is the press and other etceteras, but I think I've hit on a way to get the money to buy them."

"What's the way? Let's hear it."

"There's an old chap named Adam Grimes who lives with his niece in a small house on the outskirts of Camden. People say he's a miser and is so afraid of banks that he keeps all his money hidden somewhere on the premises."

"You can't always put stock in what people say," replied Spangler.

"I've investigated him, and find that, beyond a doubt, he's well off. He holds mortgages on many houses in Camden, and also on some of the farms around here. I've also found out that he has a sister, who is bedridden, in Eastlake, on the other side of Lake Cadillac. He is in daily expectation of hearing of her death. He also has a brother living somewhere beyond Eastlake with whom he has been on the outs for years. The sister is worth money, and has made a will leaving it equally between the two brothers, though during her lifetime, for family reasons, she will hold no communication with either brother. Each brother is worried lest the other should hear of their sister's death first, arrive at her home ahead, and get away with some of the money before it can be regularly divided."

"Well, what has this to do with us?" asked Spangler, wondering why his associate should spring such a yarn on him.

"Don't interrupt me. Adam Grimes has tipped the gardener to let him know by telegraph the moment his sister is surely at death's door. The joke of the thing is that

the other brother has also tipped the gardener to forward him the same information."

"How in thunder did you learn all this?"

"I found it out through the gardener, who was an old pal of mine once, and whom I can still depend on."

"Oh, that's what took you to Eastlake yesterday, is it?"

"You've guessed it. I arranged with Bilkins, that's the gardener, that when he received a telegraphic message from me containing the single word 'Grimes,' he was to go to the Western Union office and send a message to old Adam stating that his sister was at the point of death. Well, I sent that message this afternoon."

"Go on," said Spangler, much interested.

"As Adam Grimes has made an arrangement with the operator in the telegraph office at Camden to send him by special messenger without delay any message that comes for him from Eastlake, he has undoubtedly got the gardener's despatch by this time, and has either started, or will soon start, for his sister's home."

"Well?" said Spangler.

"That will leave his cottage without any one but his niece, who is only a girl of seventeen, to protect his property. Now it is my purpose for you and me to visit the cottage about midnight, break in by the back way, which should be an easy job, chloroform the niece, and ransack the premises for the old man's ready money. If there are a few thousands on the premises, as I feel certain there are, we ought to get them, and then the problem of raising the funds we need will be solved. How does it strike you?"

"All right. You have a great head, Wambold. But where and when shall I meet you to-night, for I know you don't care to hang around this mill for four or five hours?"

"You know the blasted oak tree on the mound about half-way between here and Camden?"

"Yes."

"Meet me there about eleven o'clock and I'll have the tools needed to break open the miser's strong box, if he has one, which I s'pose we may reckon on," said Wambold, taking a cigar from his vest pocket and a box of wind lucifers from another pocket.

Jack Jasper had easily overheard every word spoken by the men, and he had listened with eager attention to the plan afoot to rob Adam Grimes.

He determined to acquaint Ben with the facts, and get him to go to the police station in Camden and put the authorities onto the job, so that the two rascals, who were evidently counterfeiters as well, would be captured when they started to break into the old man's house.

Unfortunately for Jack's purpose the wind lucifer that Wambold used to light his cigar made a big flaring light, and as Spangler was standing facing the stairs, beneath which Jack sat, the rascal detected the boy's silent presence at once.

Jack knew that it was all up with him, for the two guns stood out of his reach and he was not in shape to either escape or offer any kind of an effective resistance.

"Hold on, there," he ejaculated, fearing Spangler might step on his sore ankle. "I'm not going to run away."

At that moment Wambold flashed a second wind lucifer, and the two men saw Jack sitting on the box, and making no effort to move.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH JACK FINDS HIMSELF IN A FIX.

"Who in thunder are you, and what are you doing in this mill?" demanded Wambold, holding the match down so he could examine the boy's face.

"I belong in Camden, and I'm not here from choice," replied Jack coolly.

"What's your name?"

"What do you want to know for?"

"Answer me, or it'll be worse for you," said Wambold in a threatening tone.

"Jack Jasper."

"What do you mean by saying you're not here from choice?"

"I was out shooting with a friend on the marsh this afternoon. On our way back past this mill I stepped on a stone and sprained my ankle badly. My friend left me here and went to get a cart to take me home. If I could have walked I wouldn't be here now."

Jack's story seemed plausible enough to Wambold, and the presence of the two shotguns and brace of bags filled

with game proved that there was some truth in his statement.

"That's all right," returned Wambold, striking another match; "but why didn't you let on you were here when you first saw us?"

"I didn't know who you were, or what you might do to me seeing me here alone and unable to defend myself."

"Now, look here; answer me, you heard all we said—isn't that so?"

"Yes," admitted the boy.

Wambold and Spangler looked at each other, and it was clear they realized that they were in a bad box.

"You can't expect us to let you go away now that you have learned things that would compromise us," said Wambold. "Self-preservation compels us to take measures to prevent you from giving us away. Understand?"

"What are you going to do with me?"

"Remove you to the cellar, and keep you a prisoner there until to-morrow some time, by which time we will have made arrangements to quit this part of the country. It isn't safe for us to stay here now since you are onto us."

"You say your friend went for a wagon to carry you home?" asked Spangler.

"Yes."

"Then your friend will have to be disappointed. We haven't any time to lose, Spangler. Help this chap down in the cellar, tie him to one of the posts in an easy position, and put a handkerchief or cloth over his mouth for the present. It won't do to give him the liberty of yelling out until I have seen his friend and sent him away," said Wambold.

So Spangler helped Jack on his feet, and told him to step out, which the boy did, for he was not in a position to refuse the order, though he was sensible that his ankle was very much better, and would bear his weight to some extent.

In this way Jack was led down into the cellar and fixed according to Wambold's instructions.

In the meantime Wambold sauntered out of the mill and went across the bridge, where he stood awaiting the arrival of Ben Burling.

It wasn't many minutes before Ben came along with a horse and a light wagon.

He reined in near Wambold, tied the animal to a tree and started for the bridge.

"Hello!" said the rascal, in a friendly tone, "have you come after Jack Jasper?"

"Yes," said Ben, wondering who this man was, as he was a stranger to him. "Have you been in the mill and seen Jasper?"

"I have. Myself and a friend came along here a while ago in a rig. We left a bundle in the mill when we went by this morning and stopped to take it up. We found your friend there sitting on a box. He told us he had sprained his ankle and couldn't walk. I offered to take him home, but he said you had gone to borrow a cart for that purpose. I told him he'd better go in my rig and that I would wait here and let you know that he had gone on. After some hesitation he consented. He's only been gone about ten minutes. He took the guns and game bags with him."

Wambold's story was so replete with facts that Ben believed him.

"All right," he replied. "It was very kind of you to put yourself out so much on my friend's account."

"Don't mention it, young man. It's only a mile to town and I don't mind the walk at all."

"I'll take this rig back, then," said Ben. "It will save me the trouble of doing it later on. Good-night."

"Good-night," replied Wambold, starting off toward Camden, while Ben drove in the opposite direction.

As soon as Burling was out of sight Wambold retraced his steps to the bridge, recrossed it and re-entered the mill.

Taking possession of the guns and game bags, he went down into the cellar, where he found things as he expected.

In the boarded-off part of the cellar Spangler was seated at a table, on which was a candle, a plate, the open grip brought by Wambold and some other things.

Spangler had made a pot of coffee on a small oil stove and was eating his supper.

Jack Jasper was seated on the floor, with a gunny-sack under him, bound to a post and gagged.

Wambold removed the towel from his face.

"I met your friend, who had brought a light wagon for

you, and told him you had gone home in my rig. He believed me and went off satisfied you were all right. chuckled the rascal, pleased at the satisfactory issue of said little maneuver.

Jack made no reply, but we are bound to say he was disgusted with the course of events.

"You must be hungry," said Wambold. "Spangler will let you have a couple of sandwiches and some coffee when he gets through. We don't intend to treat you any worse than we can help."

While he was getting away with the frugal spread Wambold and Spangler conversed in low tones at the end of the room.

After a time Spangler came over and retied Jack to the post.

It was now about eight o'clock and Wambold signified his intention of leaving the mill.

"Better gag our prisoner again, so that he can't make a noise to attract the attention of his friend if that chap finding that Jasper didn't get home, after all, should come back to the mill looking for him," he said.

Spangler said he would attend to the matter, but intimated that he wouldn't leave the mill till half-past ten anyway, and it wasn't likely Jasper's friend would come after that hour.

"You can't tell what time he may come, if he comes at all. In any case we can't afford to take chances. When you leave you will, of course, padlock the boy in here, so that even if he did get free from the post he couldn't get out of the cellar."

With those words Wambold left the cellar.

CHAPTER IV.

DESCRIEES HOW JACK MADE HIS ESCAPE.

After the departure of Wambold, Spangler busied himself packing up the two bank-note plates and his tools in a box specially made to hold them, which had a handle so it could easily be carried like a grip.

What other packing he intended to do he deferred for another time.

Taking out and lighting his pipe, he sat down at the table and looked at Jack.

"Do you often go shootin' on the marsh?" he inquired between puffs.

"I have gone during the shooting season whenever Ben and I could get off," replied Jasper, "which wasn't so often during the past year, as we were kept pretty steadily at work at the factory. Now that the works are closed down we can go when we please, that's why we were on the marsh to-day."

"So you're not workin' now?"

"No."

"When do you expect to go to work again?"

"Couldn't say. There isn't so many jobs that I can find flying around loose in Camden."

"If you were willin' to stand in with us, and keep our secret, I am sure Wambold would make it well worth your while," said Spangler, looking hard at the boy to see what effect the suggestion had on him.

"You mean you'd pay me if I agreed not to give you away?" said Jack.

"That's it. We'd pay you well. It would be to our interest to do so."

"Sorry to disappoint you, but you and Wambold haven't enough money to buy me. In fact, I'm not for sale at any price," replied Jack.

"So you won't listen to my offer?"

"Not on your life," replied Jack firmly.

"I see there is no use arguin' with you," said Spangler in a vexed tone.

"Not the slightest."

"Some people don't know a good thing when they see it," growled the engraver, refilling his pipe and lighting at the candle.

Jack did not answer him for two reasons.

First, he did not care to continue such a purposeless conversation, and, secondly, he became aware that the rope which held him to the post had become loosened in some way, and he felt that it would not be a hard matter to release himself.

Spangler continued to smoke and ruminative until the small cheap clock in the place pointed to quarter past ten.

Then he got up and put on his hat.

"I'm goin' away and I can't tell when I'll get back," he said, addressing Jack. "As a matter of extra precaution I shall lock you in here, and I shall be compelled to tie a piece of cloth around your mouth to prevent you from shoutin' in case you should hear any one walkin' around above your head. You see, we can't afford to take any chances, seein' you are against us."

Spangler did not bother about the rope which held the boy, taking it for granted that it was secure.

He tied a small piece of cloth around Jack's mouth, not too tight, and after putting out the candle, which left the cellar in the dark, he opened the door, walked out and adjusted the stout padlock on the other side.

Jack heard him making his way up the stairs, and then heard his footsteps crossing the floor above, after complete silence ensued.

"He's gone," muttered the boy. "Now to make a break for freedom, if the thing is possible for me to accomplish."

Inside of five minutes he had removed his hands from the rope and the gag from before his mouth.

Two coils of the rope still held him loosely around the waist.

His jack-knife soon made short work of them and he got on his feet to find that his injured ankle felt comparatively all right.

"That cold water treatment did wonders for me," he thought, "and several hours' rest has greatly helped it. It feels almost as good as ever, but I must not be too gay with it or I may spoil the cure."

He walked to the table and lighted the candle with one of the matches he was accustomed to carry in his pocket.

Then he looked around the boxed-in room.

Spangler's grip, containing the counterfeit plates and his engraving tools, stood on the floor.

"If I can get away from here and hide that where the rascals couldn't find it—say at the bottom of the canal, near the bridge—I'd be doing the government big service, and I might get a reward, too," thought Jack. "The problem, however, is to get out with the door padlocked."

Jack tried the door and saw that it was too strong for him to make any impression on it.

The partition itself was also strongly built and extended up to the ceiling.

Apparently wood taken from the upper part of the mill had been used in its construction.

Jack then turned his attention to other parts of the enclosure.

The stone blocks were as solid as the day they had been built, and were backed, of course, by the ground on all sides to nearly the level of the building.

It was clearly impossible to bore one's way through the sides in a limited space of time.

Looking at the ceiling in a casual way, Jack thought he saw the outlines of a trap-door in one corner.

A closer inspection showed that his eyesight was good. He got the two boxes the men used for seats, put one on top of the other and mounting them tried the trap.

It was tight and immovable from long disuse.

Jack, however, was not discouraged by this circumstance. He was reasonably sure it was not bolted on the other side, so he took a bit of joist that stood in the cellar and pounded lustily against it.

He was a strong boy, and shoveling coal into a furnace for months had made his arms muscular, so after a few minutes the trap yielded to his persistent efforts.

He threw it backward with a slam and saw the road to freedom before him.

The first thing he did was to throw the grip belonging to Spangler out on to the floor above.

The two shotguns and game bags followed, and then he pulled himself out and shut down the trap.

"That's doing pretty well for a fellow with a game leg, though my ankle feels first-class considering. Now to hide the grip," he said.

He carried it outside, intending to drop it into the canal.

Seeing a thick clump of bushes not far away, he concluded that would be a better place for it, as he didn't believe the men would think of looking for it there when they missed it.

He hid Ben's gun and bag of game there, too, and then with his own limped across the bridge and started for home.

CHAPTER V.

WHEREIN JACK OFFERS TO DEFEND BESSIE BANNISTER AND HER UNCLE'S MONEY.

"It must be close on to eleven o'clock now," thought Jack, as he marched along with a limping gait. "Those two rascals arranged to meet at the scarred oak along this road at that hour and then go to Adam Grimes's cottage. I won't have time to go home and then notify the police before they will be in the house. If Grimes got that telegram and has started for Eastlake, the cottage will be wholly at the mercy of those rascals, for the old man's niece could hardly stand them off even if she discovered them breaking in, but the chances are she'll be asleep in bed when they get there, and she won't have any show at all. I think it's my duty to go and help her frustrate their scheme. I don't see any other way just now of putting a spoke in their wheel."

The more Jack thought the matter over the more resolved he became to try and save the old man's property from the two counterfeiters.

As he drew near the scarred oak tree he became cautious, for he knew it would not do for the rascals to discover him.

However, he had both barrels of his shotgun loaded, and he determined to shoot at them rather than submit to recapture, much as he disliked the idea of shedding human blood even in self-defence.

A turn in the road brought the scarred oak in sight.

One man, evidently Spangler, was standing beside it smoking.

Wambold appeared to be behindhand in keeping his appointment, which was quite satisfactory to Jack, for it would give him time to reach Grimes's cottage ahead of the men—a very advantageous point.

In order to escape Spangler's notice all Jack had to do was to take to the woods behind the oak tree and circle around to the road further on.

This plan he followed, soon leaving Spangler and the scarred oak behind.

In due time he reached the old man's cottage which stood a hundred feet back from the highway, without seeing anything of Wambold, whose approach from town he had been watching for.

As he placed his hand on the gate he made out a figure in the distance which he judged was Wambold, so in order to escape observation he let himself into the front garden and crouched down behind the fence, where he could observe the person as he passed.

It was Wambold, walking at a brisk rate, with a carpet bag in his hand.

As soon as he had gone on some distance, Jack walked up to the front door and began to pound upon it.

The noise he made echoed through the house and awoke Bessie Bannister, Adam Grimes's niece, who slept in a back room on the second floor.

She had been in bed more than two hours, and was the only occupant of the cottage, her uncle having got the decoy telegram and departed for Eastlake right after supper.

She was a plucky girl, and did not fear remaining by herself in the house, for the possibility of being disturbed by thieves that particular night had not entered her head.

Indeed, a burglary in Camden or its environs was such a rarity that few persons thought about the possibility of such a thing happening.

The neighborhood, therefore, would have been a cinch for a couple of expert professionals in the housebreaking line.

The girl wondered at such a peremptory summons at that hour of the night, and, fearing some accident had happened to her uncle, she hastily threw on a wrapper and went to one of the front windows, which she raised.

"Who's there?" she asked.

"I am, miss," replied Jack, stepping out from under the shelter of the porch. "Has Mr. Grimes gone to Eastlake?"

"Yes," she answered. "What do you want with him?"

"Nothing with him since he is away as I supposed. I want you to come to the door and I will tell you what brought me here."

"Who are you?"

"Jack Jasper. It is important that you come to the door, for there is a plot on foot to rob this house at midnight."

"Rob this house!" gasped Bessie, aghast.

"That's what I said, miss. I accidentally learned all about it, and as there isn't time for me to go on to town and notify

the police, even if I didn't have a sprained ankle, I decided to come right here and help you stand the scoundrels off."

Bessie didn't know Jack, and she had some doubts as to the propriety, or even the prudence, of admitting a strange boy into the cottage at night where she was alone, so she hesitated about complying with his request, especially as she could not imagine who in that neighborhood was wicked enough to plan a robbery of her uncle's home.

"I don't think it would be the right thing for me to let you into the house at this hour when my uncle is away," she said, doubtfully.

"If you don't let me in, miss, I'll have to stand here with my gun and take my chances against them single-handed, for I am resolved that they shall not rob the cottage if I can help it," replied Jack in a tone that somehow inspired her with confidence.

"If what you have told me is true, you might be hurt down there," she said.

"That's a chance I'll have to take if you won't let me in," he answered.

"I have never heard my uncle speak about you."

"He doesn't know me personally. He only knows me as a friend of Ben Burling, who lives in one of his cottages."

"You are a friend of Mr. Burling's, then?"

"Yes. He and I are great friends. I was his fireman at the engine-house of the Camden Furniture Manufactory until it shut down the other day. I live half a mile from here, close to town, with my mother and sister. I assure you that you need not be afraid to admit me to the house, and it will be greatly to your interest to do so."

There was an honest ring to Jack's voice that further reassured the maiden, and she finally decided to take the chances.

Before going downstairs, however, she took her uncle's revolver from his bureau drawer.

Drawing the bolts of the front door, and unlocking it, she stepped back, the revolver partially concealed by the folds of her wrapper.

As she stood there in the full reflection of the light of a lamp she had brought downstairs and placed on a small table in the hall, Jack thought he never had seen a lovelier girl.

Her features were of the clear-cut Grecian type; her form was symmetrical and graceful to a degree, while her golden hair was plaited in two coils that hung down her back below the line of her waist.

"The robbers will be here in a few minutes, miss," said Jack, not making a move to enter the cottage; "but if you still have any doubts as to the honesty of my purpose you can close the door, and I will remain out here and do my best to defend you and your uncle's property."

There was a frankness and honesty in Jasper's bearing, and a sincerity in his manly countenance which dissipated all her doubts, and she said, in a calm voice:

"Come in, Mr. Jasper; I feel that I can trust you."

Jack accordingly entered, and putting down his gun and game bag made the door fast again.

"The men intend to break in at the back of the house, so I had better go there. Will you tell me your name, miss?"

"Bessie Bannister."

"Thank you. I am pleased to make your acquaintance even in so informal a way as the present," he said, with a smile.

Jack was a good looking, manly boy, and the girl took an instant liking for him.

She no longer entertained any doubts as to the truthfulness of his statement about the projected robbery of the cottage, nor of the propriety of admitting him under the circumstances.

"Will you show me the way to the back, Miss Bannister?" he said, taking his gun.

"Follow me," and taking up the lamp she led the way to the kitchen, which was as neat as a trained housekeeper could make it.

"I will turn down the light and place the lamp on yonder shelf," said Jack. "I intend to give these rascals a surprise that they won't soon forget."

After carrying this part of the programme out, Jack said:

"You have a revolver, I see. Have you the nerve to use it in case of necessity?"

She smiled confidently.

"I am accustomed to handling it, and I am not afraid to use it if it was necessary for me to do," she said in a way that raised his admiration.

"I see that you're not a coward, Miss Bannister," he replied.

"I should hope not. My father was an officer in the army and was killed with Custer at Little Big Horn, while my grandfather fought through the Rebellion with the 110th Illinois Regiment," she said, proudly.

"Miss Bannister, I take my hat off to you. I am proud to know the daughter of any hero who fell with Custer. I have read the story of that fierce one-sided fight, and my blood quickened in my veins and my soul thrilled as I tried to imagine the awful massacre of those men as they fought doggedly against overwhelming odds and fell to the last man."

Jack spoke with the fire of enthusiasm in his eye, and this girl saw in his admiring glance a newly-born respect for her that instinctively softened her heart toward him.

"While I remain here, Miss Bannister," continued Jack, "I wish you would go to one of the upper front windows and watch the road in the direction of the old mill. The two men were to meet at the scarred oak, midway between here and the mill, and then come here. I saw one of them at the tree waiting for his companion, who passed this house just before I aroused you, so we may look for them at any moment now."

"I will do as you bid, Mr. Jasper," said Bessie; "but I want to thank you now for so generously coming to my aid to-night. I fear but for you these rascals would have gone into the house and have overpowered me before I had a hint of their intentions."

"Don't mention it, Miss Bannister. I regard it as a pleasure to be of service to you. As soon as we have frightened these fellows off I'll tell you how I came to find out their designs on this place," said Jack.

Bessie went upstairs, leaving her revolver on the kitchen table.

When she glanced down the road from a window in her uncle's room she saw two men coming toward the house, one of them carrying a carpet bag.

"These must be the thieves," she thought, watching them from behind the curtains. "How fortunate it is that I have a protector in the house! How good he is to run the risk of facing those two men to save me from a terrible experience and protect my uncle's property! How brave he is, and how handsome!"

Wambold and Spangler paused at the gate and looked at the house.

It was dark and silent.

Satisfied that the place was practically at their mercy, they opened the gate and entered the garden.

Bessie immediately rushed downstairs to the kitchen, where Jack stood, gun in hand, waiting for the burglars to show up.

"They have just entered the front yard," she said, in a low, excited tone.

"Here's your revolver. Stand back of me in the entry. The rascals will probably try to force an entrance through the window of this room, as it is easier to overcome than the door. The moment they get it open we must give them the surprise of their lives," said Jasper.

As he spoke both saw the two men come into view around the corner of the house.

They walked up to the kitchen window and peered inside.

Jack pushed Bessie back and kept out of range of the rascals' vision.

Then the young people awaited the next move of the thieves with a feeling of excited suspense.

CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH WAMBOLD AND SPANGLER MEET WITH AN UNPLEASANT SURPRISE.

Wambold and his associate lost no time in beginning operations.

They selected the window, as Jack judged they would, and began work on it.

Their object was to reach and unloosen the catch which held the two sashes.

To accomplish this Wambold first fastened a rubber sucker to the pane and then ran a glazier's diamond over a square surface of the glass large enough, when removed, to enable him to run his arm through with ease.

Giving the glass a smart rap, it came away, and Wambold lowered it to the floor by means of a long string attached to the sucker.

Then he inserted his arm, turned the catch and pushed the lower sash up to its fullest extent.

"Get in," he said to Spangler, and his companion started to obey.

He threw one leg in, and was in the act of swinging

round into the room when Jack discharged the contents of one of the barrels of his shotgun into the leg.

With a roar of surprise and pain Spangler fell into the room, and lay groaning on the floor.

Wambold, panic-stricken at the unexpected and warm reception they had received, started to run.

Jack rushed to the window and discharged his other barrel after him.

Some of the bird-shot wounded him in one leg, but as it was not enough to disable him, he only ran the faster and disappeared around the corner of the house.

Seizing the revolver from Bessie's hand Jack ran to the front door, opened it and caught sight of Wambold passing through the gate.

He discharged several shots after the fleeing rascal, without hitting him, however.

Jack then returned to the kitchen, where he found that Bessie had turned up the lamp and was looking at the disassembled and groaning burglar.

"Got a lounge handy, Miss Bannister?" asked the boy.

"Yes, there is one in the sitting-room," she replied.

"Take the lamp in there and then come back."

Spangler, noting a familiar ring in the boy's voice, looked him, and, with an ejaculation of surprise, recognized the lad he had supposed was securely housed behind a strong aspadlock in the cellar of the old mill.

"You!" he exclaimed, with something like an imprecation.

"Yes, it's me all right," replied Jack, as Bessie carried the light from the room. "I got tired of staying in the cellar after you went away, so I worked myself free of the rope and walked out."

Bessie now came back.

"I'll take him by the back and shoulders, while you lift his legs, Miss Bannister, and we'll carry him to the lounge in the sitting-room," said Jack.

Between them they conveyed the unfortunate burglar to the front of the house and laid him on the lounge.

Jack returned to the kitchen and closed the window.

Then he called Bessie out of the sitting-room.

"I have to leave you alone with that fellow, even though you have a revolver with which to protect yourself, but I feel that I ought to run over to Doctor Boyle's house and bring him here to relieve this rascal of his pain and the leaden pellets I put into his leg. It would be cruel to make the fellow suffer all night as he is doing now. The doctor has a telephone in his house, and will be able to communicate the particulars to the police and ask that a couple of officers be sent to this cottage to take charge of our prisoner in the name of the law. There is little danger that the man who escaped will return here again to-night. The last I saw of him he was cutting down the road at a two-forty gait."

"Go to the doctor by all means, Mr. Jasper. I will watch this man and the house as well," replied the plucky girl.

So Jack hurried to the doctor's home, about a third of a mile away, and aroused him.

"What's wanted?" asked Doctor Boyle, sticking his head out of a second-story window, and not pleased at being awakened at that hour of the night.

"You are wanted to attend a man shot in the leg with the greater part of a charge of bird-shot," replied the boy.

"I'll dress and come down," answered the physician.

"You've got a telephone, haven't you, doctor?"

"Yes."

"Could you let me in before you dress? I want to communicate with the police station, and it will save time to do it while you're getting ready."

"Did somebody try to murder this man you want me to attend?"

"No; he was shot while breaking into Adam Grimes's house a little while ago."

He came right downstairs and admitting Jack led him into his office and pointed out the telephone.

As the doctor returned upstairs, Jack called up the police office and asked to be connected with the police station.

As soon as this was done, the boy briefly stated the facts to the man at the other end of the wire, and asked the policemen to drive out to Adam Grimes's house for the purpose of taking Spangler into custody.

By the time he had rung off the doctor was ready, and Jack started for the miser's cottage.

On the way the boy narrated all the facts to the girl.

Reaching the cottage, Doctor Boyle proceeded to Spangler's hurts the girl withdrawing to the kitchen.

It took some time for the extraction of all the small shot, and by the time Spangler's wounds were dressed the police men arrived, and he was removed to the Camden jail.

The doctor also took his departure, leaving Jack alone.

Jasper then told the girl the whole story of his escape from the moment he sprained his ankle at sundown to the time he had made his escape from the mill to start for her uncle's cottage, hoping to be off the burglarious plans of the two countesses.

"My uncle got a telegram about five o'clock this morning, which said that his sister, my aunt, had died, and told him to come home at once. He got ready at once to leave, and told me to have him to ride across to Jordan and cross the lake, so he took the ferry across and then he could connect with a train to the Junction, from which point he

"When he reaches his sister's house, the telegram was a fake one. I having sent it, otherwise he would not have made the trip. The object of his uncle away from this country is to have a clear field for the trial of my ankle, and been obliged to go west for a rig of some kind. Their plan would have been to have him go west and then have him go to the Junction, from which point he

"I'm afraid it would be a bad idea for him to learn all the facts about his property. I feel deeply indebted to me, and I shall be obliged to pay him back."

She gave Jasper a kiss and he felt that it was for her sake.

"You are welcome to the honor of repaying me," he said.

"I shall be obliged to Jasper," said he. "And I am obliged to him. People are sometimes the representatives of people who do not care for people. I desire that he should be a good man, and he has a good heart, and is a prudent and hard-working man."

Bessie and he

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"That's funny," replied the engineer. "According to my calculation he ought to have been home an hour ago."

Ben proceeded to tell them how Jack had sprained so badly near the old mill that he (Ben) had been sent to a neighboring farmhouse and borrow a horse to take him home in.

"I was in the lower floor of the mill. When I got home I was met there by a stranger, who told me that way in his rig with a companion and I went to the mill. He said he had sent him home then, having learned from Jack that I had kind of vehicle, he had remained to tell me."

I accepted his statement, returned to the farmer, and came straight on home, and now you tell me Jack concluded Ben.

"Story the clock struck nine.

"That stranger's companion could be beginning to feel that all was

"been honest," replied Mrs. Grimes, "the man who took him in his rig, seeing that he was himself."

"I do that. They could 'll, though I don't believe it," replied Ben.

"I sat the man at the mill, and he might have told him to keep him from going into the mill, but he was there at the

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"heaven, that's over now," said his mother, with a sigh of relief.

A frugal meal of cold meat, bread, butter and tea awaited Jack when he sat up to the table, and for a while he devoted his attention to cleaning up the contents of the plates.

Then he sat back and began his story of his night's experiences.

Mother and daughter listened with breathless interest to the recital.

"You certainly put in a great night, Jack," said his sister. "I did, and now I'm going to bed, and you two had better likewise."

Before Jack got into bed his mother bathed his ankle with liniment and bandaged it up with a liberal dose of the same.

"I hope it will be all right in the morning," he said, giving her a good-night kiss.

"It ought to be much better," she replied, putting out the light and leaving the room.

The Jasper family slept late that morning, and Jack didn't make his appearance in the little dining-room until breakfast was on the table.

After the meal he went over to see Ben, and was surprised to find him laid up in bed.

"What in creation is the matter with you, Ben?" he asked the sufferer.

"I collided with a buggy and came off second best. And now tell me what the dickens kept you away from home so late?" asked Ben.

"Oh, a number of things," laughed Jack. "I didn't get home till half-past two, and found mother and sis worried to death about me."

"Well, I'd like to hear all about the matter."

"I'm ready to oblige you."

Thereupon Jack told Ben the story of his night's adventures.

Of course the engineer was astonished at his narrative.

He asked a string of questions, and then declared that Ben had done a big thing in getting away with the grip containing the counterfeit plates.

"You will surely get a reward from the Government. You must go out to the mill in a rig and bring that grip, my gun and game bag back with you right away. Then you must write to the Treasury Department at Washington, detailing all the facts of the case, and notifying the Department that the plates are now in your possession."

Jack said he would follow Ben's instructions, and after some further conversation he visited a friend, borrowed his horse and light wagon, and started for the mill.

He found the spot as deserted as usual, with no sign of Wambold about.

The articles he came after were in the bushes where he left them, and he took possession of them, and carried them to his house.

He returned the horse and wagon with thanks, and after dinner wrote a long letter to the Secretary of the Treasury which he posted without delay.

Then he went over to Ben's house to see how he was getting on.

"I'll be all right to-morrow," said Ben, who was sitting up in bed reading. "I narrowly escaped serious injury, but after all a miss is as good as a mile. The man who ran me down gave me \$100 to square the matter, and I let it go at that. The money will come in very handy until I pick up something to do. Old Grimes ought to give you something handsome for savin' his niece and his money; but between you and the gate post it isn't at all certain that you'll get more from him than his thanks. I'm afraid it would break his heart to give up anything in the line of cash, so I didn't figure on it."

"I don't expect him to pay me for what I did," replied Ben.

"If he should offer to pay me I would refuse to accept it. It was my duty to act as I did, and the knowledge that I succeeded in queering those rascals is satisfaction enough for me."

At that moment Millie Burling came to the door and said there was a police officer below who wanted to see Jack. Ben had been over to your house several times after you, the officer, when Jasper went to the front door. "You're at the magistrate's court to appear as a witness in the man Spangler, who was arrested at the Grimes' last night."

"I'll go with you," replied Jack; "I'll go with you." The interfeiter's examination had been put off to await the trial of Jack.

He found Bessie Bannister in the court, waiting to be called on to testify.

Jack shook hands with her and seated himself by her side.

The magistrate having been informed that Jasper was in court, he ordered the prisoner to be brought before him and the proceedings were opened.

The testimony of Jack and Bessie was deemed amply sufficient to hold Spangler on the charge of burglary, and accordingly he was remanded for trial.

Jack said nothing about Spangler being a counterfeiter as well, as he guessed that was a matter for the United States authorities to attend to.

Jack walked home with Bessie, and allowed himself to be persuaded to stay and have supper with her.

They had just finished when Adam Grimes entered, grip in hand, after his purposeless journey to Eastlake.

He was surprised to see Jack Jasper, whom he only knew by sight, a guest of his niece, but he made no fuss about it.

When Bessie told him the story of the previous night, and explained the great obligation they both were under to Jack, his customary crusty manner relaxed, and he thanked the boy in a way that showed he meant it.

He made no offer to reward Jack, but he assured the boy he would not soon forget the service he had rendered Bessie and himself.

"Come and see us as often as you feel disposed," he said, as Jack rose to go. "Bessie and I will always be glad to see you. Who knows but I may be able to be of great service to you? At any rate, you shall have no reason to say that I am ungrateful to you for what you did for us last night."

Bessie accompanied Jack to the front door.

"I shall be happy to see you at any time you'd care to call, Mr. Jasper," she said. "I have scarcely any friends, for our neighbors seem to shun us on account of my uncle's reputation, which, as I told you last night, is wholly undeserved. So I shall be glad to have at least one friend in you if you think me worthy of your consideration."

"Worthy of my consideration!" replied Jack. "I consider myself honored by being permitted to call on you, and I shall be glad to have you consider me a friend."

Bessie smiled and offered Jack her hand.

Jasper took it, held it a moment or two, then wished her good-night.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN WHICH THE CANAL ROUTE IS DISCUSSED.

The story of the attempted robbery of Adam Grimes's cottage, and how it was frustrated through the plucky conduct of Jack Jasper, was duly chronicled in the one daily paper published in Camden, and it created a sensation, for, as we have before remarked, such a thing as a burglary in Camden and its environs was a rare occurrence.

Two officers had been sent to scour the neighborhood for miles around after Wambold, Spangler's companion in guilt, but they were unable to find him, so it was concluded that he had taken time by the forelock, and left that part of the State.

Some days later a quiet looking man, dressed like a business man, called at the Jasper cottage and asked for Jack.

He was told that the boy had gone off shooting on the marsh with his friend Burling.

"I will call this evening," replied the stranger, who then departed, leaving Mrs. Jasper wondering who he was.

Jack was finishing his supper when the stranger reappeared, and the boy invited him into the sitting-room.

"Allow me to introduce myself," and the visitor handed the boy an unsealed envelope.

Jack found the enclosure was a letter from the Secret Service Bureau at Washington, introducing Frank Brower, and instructing Jack to deliver to him the counterfeit plates and other articles he had secured at the old mill.

The writer added that he would be taken care of, which Jack understood meant that he would receive some monetary or other recognition for his services in the matter.

Accordingly the boy went to his room, brought the grip down and handed it to the representative of the Government Secret Service.

The visitor then asked him to tell all the particulars of how he had come by the plates and other things.

Jack told the full story, including the attempted burglary of Adam Grimes's cottage, which the counterfeiters had undertaken in order to raise the funds needed to purchase a press and other things needed to print the counterfeit notes.

The caller having obtained all he wanted, complimented Jack on his pluck, hinted that he would not be forgotten, and took his leave.

Next morning's paper contained the news of a fifteen per cent. reduction in the wages of every employee, except the executive heads of departments, on the D. & G. trunk system, of which the line running to Lathrop, Centerport and other points north on the western shore of the Salmon River, was an important branch.

The departmental clerks, station agents and the heads of the various mechanical branches accepted the reduction with the best grace they could, but the engineers, firemen and a host of other employees made a big kick, and seemed disposed to resist the mandate.

Meetings were held by the disaffected ones and committees waited on the various division superintendents to voice the objection of the men to the announced wage reduction.

The committees received one reply—that the business depression throughout the country caused heavy loss to fall on the railroads, and the reduction was imperative and would be enforced.

Two weeks from the promulgation of the wage reduction order the engineers and firemen of the Centerport branch went on strike, and the whole passenger and freight service of this line was tied up as tight as a drum.

Not a wheel was allowed to turn except an engine and a postal mail car twice a day each way.

The engineers and firemen on the main line and other branches continued to report for duty, although the tying up of the entire system was threatened.

The Centerport branch, it developed, was to be used to test the power of resistance on the part of the company, because it was the only outlet by rail for the large ore shipments of the Esmeralda Copper Mines.

Of course the shippers and the general public raised a howl at once, for all towns along the line of the Centerport branch from Clayton Junction north were cut off from railroad communication with the main line.

These towns were nearly all on the river, but the railroad having put the old Salmon River Navigation Co. out of commission, there wasn't a steamboat running on the river to help the people out in this emergency.

Even had there been steamboats in readiness to equip a temporary service the unusual low water in the Salmon River that spring would not have carried them over the shallows at a place called Sasafax Bend, one mile below Camden.

Freight of all kinds, particularly the output of the Esmeralda Copper Mines, was held up by the strike, and every day the situation became worse.

Jack Jasper and Ben Burling were greatly interested in the outcome of the strike.

At the end of a week they found it was no nearer solution than on the first day that the men went out.

"Say, Ben, I heard to-day that if the company succeeds in getting engineers and firemen enough to begin moving its rolling stock the freight handlers will at once quit work," said Jack.

"I wouldn't be surprised if they did. The employees of the entire system are making a test case of the Centerport branch, which is a most important part of the line. If they can keep it tied up they may be able to bring the road to terms."

"The strikers, I hear, have plenty of money in the strike fund."

"Why shouldn't they when an assessment has been levied on the wages of every engineer and fireman working on the system, as well as on all the freight men and certain other employees? The strikers claim to be able to keep the fight up for an indefinite time."

"If they can make good their boast, what are shippers along the branch going to do to get their goods to market?"

"Ask me something easy, Jack," laughed Ben.

"If the old canal-boat company was in commission now it would be able to make a good thing out of this tie-up. Freight could be brought down from Centerport by the river, as of yore, carried through the canal and sent across Lake Cadillac to Eastlake, where the railroad is in full operation."

"It wouldn't be a bad idea if some enterprising person resurrected the old line. If the strike lasted long enough he might make a barrel of money."

"That's my idea exactly. I'd like to do it myself if I had the funds to start the boats up. It would give us both a good job, at any rate."

"Do you think you could run such a transportation line?"
"I'm sure of it."

"Then why not call on old Grimes and broach your idea? He owes you a debt of gratitude for saving his money-bags. If you put the matter to him right he might be willin' to back your scheme enough to put you on your feet."

"I've been thinking about it, Ben," replied Jack, with an earnest look. "I'll call on the old man's niece and have a talk with her about the matter first. She's a sensible girl, and is friendly toward me. She can tell me whether there is any use of me striking her uncle on the subject."

"That's right," nodded Ben. "Now is the time to work this idea up. It might prove the stepping-stone to your fortune."

"A canal route to fortune would be something new these up-to-date days when slow things don't work as a rule," laughed Jack.

"Well, the situation on the other side of the river is most unusual. You might say that the whole mechanical force of the D. & G. system is fighting to bring the company to terms by keeping the traffic of the Centerport branch stalled. The company is losing a lot of money every day, but the wages lost to the strikers is being made up to them by the assessment on the men working on the rest of the system. That puts the strikers on Easy Street, and will enable them to hold out indefinitely if they can keep the railroad from moving its rolling stock."

"The company is going to ask for the aid of State troops to keep the strikers from bribing or intimidating the new engineers and firemen who offer their services to the road, so the morning paper says."

"And I suppose the company will call on the courts to enjoin the strikers maintaining a picket line, and all that; but I'll wager the men are determined enough to find means of getting around all the difficulties they find themselves up against."

"They're in for a big fight in order to win their point, and the longer it lasts the better it would be for my canal idea," said Jack.

"Sure thing. It would give you the chance to build up a business that you might be able to continue even after the railroad settled the matter. The only thing that will be against you is the slow method of canal transportation; but then the canal is short, and the route to Eastlake direct. The Eastlakers would find it to their advantage to support you, and also the steamboat company on Lake Cadillac. All that you need is a backer in this, and old Grimes is the man. The trouble is he's closer than wax, but then the canal was originally his scheme, and a pet hobby with him. Put it up to him right and perhaps he'll see you through whether he can make any money out of it or not," said Ben, encouragingly.

"I will. I'll call on Miss Bannister this afternoon," said Jack, rising from his chair, with a newly-born feeling of enthusiasm in what he considered a brilliant scheme, in which he thought he saw the chance of his life.

After dinner Jack Jasper started for the Grimes cottage.

His mind was filled with one absorbing idea—the canal scheme which the tangled condition of the Centerport branch of the D. & G. Railroad made feasible.

If anything was to be done it must be pushed at once, and Jack was determined to strike the iron while it was hot.

He was full of ambition, and had the determination of a great general of industry who sees the chance to make a ten-strike by a sharp and aggressive effort.

He pulled the old-fashioned bell handle and Bessie came to the door.

She smiled in a pleased way and invited him in.

"I hope I am not interfering with your household duties, Miss Bannister," said Jack; "but I wanted to discuss with you a matter of importance."

"Oh, I'm not very busy just now," she replied, leading him into the sitting-room, which was bright with sunshine and the faint odor of house plants.

She seated herself beside him on the lounge.

"To begin with, I believe you are a friend of mine and will give me the benefit of your advice and encouragement in a plan which, if I can put it through, may do great things for me," said Jack.

"You may depend on my friendship, Mr. Jasper, and if I can help you in any way I will gladly do it," she answered, with an expectant look.

"It is possible you may think my idea a bit ridiculous. If you do don't hesitate to point out any objection that strikes

you," went on the boy. "It is natural for me to be over enthusiastic about a scheme that strikes me as a winner."

"I will listen to you, but I'm only an inexperienced boy in matters of business, so I cannot promise you what value my advice or suggestions may be to you. My uncle would be better able to advise you than I, and I know he will gladly assist you, for he has taken a great liking for you. He has told me so. This is unusual for him to do, for he does not care to make new friendships. You appear to be an exception. He says he is sure you are a bright, ambitious boy who will make your way ahead in the world. Indeed, he was talking about reviving his canal project in view of the present railroad situation across the river, and putting you in charge of the business if you were willing to make the venture."

"He was!" almost gasped Jack. "Why, it is about the canal route that I came to speak with you. I wanted to sound you on the subject to see if it was of any use for me to interview your uncle about it."

"Is it possible!" she exclaimed, with a look of surprise. "I am sorry that my uncle is out at present; but I would suggest that you call this evening and see him. If I am not mistaken he will be pleased to take the matter up with you. Were he a younger man I think he would start the canal route himself in view of the present circumstances. That, however, is out of the question; but if you have ambitious ideas connected with the canal I think he will help you in every way he can."

"I believe he still controls the right-of-way and has prevented the franchise from lapsing by running a boat from this town to Jordan and back once a month since the company went out of existence?"

"Yes. The canal route could be revived at any time if I paid to use it."

"Well, I'll tell you my plan, and you can let me know what you think of it," said Jack, who proceeded to outline the scheme he had in mind.

"I think it a very good plan," said Bessie, when he had finished, "and I feel sure my uncle will approve of it, and help you carry it out."

"You encourage me greatly, Miss Bessie—I beg your pardon, I should say Miss Bannister."

"You may call me Bessie if you wish," she replied. "Miss Bannister seems too formal between us, and you are almost like an old friend already."

"Thank you. So you really think your uncle will look favorably on my plan?"

"I really do. I know he is anxious to do you a service in recognition of the debt he feels we both owe you, so I would advise you to call and see him early this evening. I will tell him that you will call, and I will explain, in a general way, the object you have in view."

"I am greatly obliged to you, Miss Bessie."

"You need not be, for I am glad to be of any service to you," she replied in a tone which showed she meant it.

After talking a while longer Jack went away.

CHAPTER IX.

TREATS OF A LETTER JACK RECEIVED AND HOW HE AND BEN VISIT WHITEHALL STREET.

Jack had finished his supper and was preparing to visit Adam Grimes for the purpose of laying his canal route scheme before him, hoping that he would be able to interest him in it, when his sister came to his room with a note which, she said, had just been left by a boy.

Tearing open the envelope, which was addressed in a handwriting unfamiliar to him, Jasper looked at the signature at the bottom of the brief communication.

To his surprise he saw that the writer was Adam Grimes. At least that was the name signed to the note which ran as follows:

"JACK JASPER—I wish to see you this evening on very important business. You have done me a great service in saving my house from being robbed, and I want to repay you by putting you in the way of making a good deal of money. Don't fail to come as soon as you get this note, as I shall be waiting for you. You will find me at my office in the building No. 16 Whitehall street. Come alone, as this interview will be private and confidential."

"Yours,

ADAM GRIMES."

"I never heard that Mr. Grimes had an office, and Whitehall street seems an odd place for him to be located," thought

Jack, reflectively, as he read the note over again. "Why should he want to see me there at night, when his cottage would be ever so much better for a private and confidential interview? Still, he has the reputation of being an eccentric person, and I dare say he does things different from other people. I suppose Bessie has told him what I said to her about starting up the old canal route again, and he thinks the idea such a good one that he wants to go over the matter with me where he has the books and documents of the old company on tap. Probably the reason he has a place of business in Whitehall street is because the rent is cheap there, and he doesn't mind appearances. I know it is one of the poorest streets in Camden, and down along the river front. Laborers and stevedores live there with their families. It isn't a locality that I'm stuck on visiting at night, but I suppose I must do it if I want to secure the financial assistance and co-operation of Mr. Grimes."

Jack went downstairs, told his mother where he was bound and left the house.

As he was crossing the bridge over the canal he met Ben at the other end.

"Hello, Jack, I was just going over to your house," he said. "Were you coming to call on me?"

"No. I'm on my way to meet old man Grimes."

"Where do you expect to meet him?" asked Ben, in some surprise, for that wasn't the road to the Grimes cottage.

"At his office in Whitehall street."

"Whitehall street!" ejaculated Ben, still more surprised. "You don't mean to say he has an office in that locality?"

"That's what his note says."

"You got a note from him?"

"Yes. A boy left it at my house a little while ago."

"And he told you to meet him in Whitehall street?"

"No. 16."

"I never knew before that there were offices in that street. It is the toughest section of Camden. I suppose you know that?"

"I know it, and I've been wondering how it happens that the old man has a place there. I suppose it's because he may own the building, or because the rent is cheap."

"Well, this is certainly a surprise to me. I supposed that he transacted all his business at his cottage. I don't see what he wants with an office, anyway."

"It might be the old canal company's office."

"No," replied Ben, shaking his head, "the canal company had their office on Wayne street, near Washington."

"Well, I made an arrangement with the old man's niece to call at their house to-night in relation to my canal project, and was on the point of starting for the cottage when the boy left the note."

"Did Grimes say what he wanted to see you about?"

"He didn't state it in so many words, but I judge from what he did say that it is about the canal matter he wants to talk with me. He said that he wanted to repay me for saving his house from being robbed by putting me in the way of making a good deal of money. If he has decided to back me up in the canal scheme that will probably put me in the way of making a good deal of money."

"I see; but I should think his home would be the most convenient place for him to hold this interview."

"I think so, too; but he appears to have a different idea."

"He certainly acts a whole lot different from most people."

Jack and Ben were walking into the town while they carried on this conversation.

When they reached Burling's cottage Ben said that if Jack had no objection he would walk with him as far as Whitehall street.

"I haven't any objection," replied Jack. "In fact, I shall be glad to have you do so."

"I want to see where this office of Grimes's is."

"You can't come in, for he told me to come alone, as the interview was to be private and confidential."

"Oh, I don't want to butt in. I'm only curious to see where the old man transacts his business. Maybe he is doing something along the river front. He owns the three tugs that originally belonged to the canal company, but I suppose they were employed at Centerport. I guess it would be pretty hard to keep tab on Grimes, anyway. Instead of having his cash hidden at his cottage, as people think, it wouldn't surprise me to learn that he has it invested in some profitable river business. That would account for his having an office in Whitehall Street."

"That's so," nodded Jack. "There is a lot of business done on the river."

The two walked on, talking, their conversation drifting around to the possibilities offered by the revival of the canal route.

At length they reached Whitehall street, and Jack began looking for No. 16.

It was a short, dirty-looking thoroughfare.

The whole of one side, where the odd numbers ran, was occupied with the cheapest kind of ramshackle tenements, filled with the poor class of Camden.

The opposite side, running between two wharves, was covered with similar kinds of buildings, in which lived the riffraff of the town in boarding-houses of the lowest grade.

There were saloons sandwiched in between ship chandlery and junk shops, with here and there a restaurant that looked far from inviting to either Jack or Ben.

"I'd have to be pretty hungry to eat in one of those places," remarked Ben.

"I'd walk a long distance on an empty stomach before I'd do it," replied Jack. "Here's No. 16 now."

The number was inscribed in rude white figures, evidently the work of an unpracticed hand, over a narrow doorway leading into a narrow, dark and filthy hall.

It was the last building in the world where one would expect to find an office, and both Jack and Ben looked at it doubtfully.

"Are you sure you've got the number right?" asked Ben. "Maybe it's 116 in the next block, on the other side of that wharf."

"No. 16 is the number in the note," replied Jack.

"Well, if the old man has an office in this building he must be off his perch, that's all I've got to say," said Ben.

They noticed a rough-looking man lounging in the doorway, who eyed them sharply as they came up.

As they came to a pause opposite the doorway the fellow stepped forward and said:

"Are yer lookin' for Adam Grimes?"

"Has he an office in this building?" asked Jack.

"That's what he has. He's expectin' a young feller named Jasper to call here to-night. Are you the party?"

"That's my name."

"Yer was to come alone, wasn't yer?"

"My friend here thought he'd walk as far as the street with me."

"Yer friend kin go on then, and you kin foller me and I'll show you upstairs to the office."

"What part of the building is Mr. Grimes's office?"

"One floor up in the back."

"Well, Ben, I'll see you in the morning and let you know whether it was the canal scheme or not Mr. Grimes called me here to talk about," said Jack, smothering his repugnance to enter the building.

"I don't like the idea of your entering this place alone, Jack," whispered Ben. "Somehow I have my suspicions that all isn't just right."

"Nonsense!" laughed Jasper, who was pluck to the backbone. "What danger can there be to me?"

"Come on, young feller," interrupted the tough. "I'm waitin' yer yer."

"Good-night, Ben," said Jack.

Ben responded in a half-hearted way, and watched his companion and the tough enter the black hallway with some misgivings.

As they disappeared in the gloom he started reluctantly down the street.

After walking fifty feet he stopped irresolutely, and then as if he had come to a sudden resolution he turned about and retraced his steps.

CHAPTER X.

HOW JACK FINDS HIMSELF IN A TRAP, AND BEN COMES TO HIS RESCUE.

In the meantime Jack followed his tough guide up a rickety flight of stairs to the landing of the second floor.

A dirty oil lamp, suspended in a tin holder affixed to one of the walls, cast a dim, uncertain illumination around the head of the stairs.

The only other light to be seen was that which shone through a transom pane over a door at the end of the dark corridor.

Toward this the tough guided Jack, who was thoroughly disgusted with the surroundings and approaches to Mr. Grimes's place of business.

Reaching the door, the tough knocked three times on one

of the panels, and a voice, which did not sound like the old man's, responded, "Come in."

The fellow threw open the door and told Jack to walk inside.

As the boy obeyed he followed him in, closed the door and shot the bolt.

In addition to the fact that the room did not show the slightest resemblance to an office, the action of the tough was so suspicious that Jasper instinctively felt that he had fallen into a trap.

Like a flash the thought now came to him that the letter had not been written and sent to him by Adam Grimes, but by some one else from sinister motives.

If that was true who could this enemy be, and what did he hope to gain by so artful a trick?

The answer came even as the thought passed through his brain.

Out of the gloom of the adjoining room stepped a well-dressed man.

One glance at his face explained everything to Jack.

The man was Wambold, the counterfeiter of the old mill.

"I am delighted to meet you again, Jack Jasper," he said with an evil laugh.

"I suppose you wrote that letter, signed Adam Grimes, which brought me here to-night?" replied Jack, aggressively.

"Your supposition is correct, young man," chuckled the rascal.

"Well, now you've got me here what do you want with me?"

"To settle scores between us."

His answer was not very reassuring to the boy.

"You've done me a whole lot of harm, young man, and I'm going to get square. I wouldn't have minded your standing Spangler and me off at Grimes's cottage so much if you hadn't got away with those plates of the treasury notes. They represent weeks of skilled and laborious labor on the part of Spangler, and we counted on them to make the haul of our lives. I reckon we'd have done it if you hadn't butted in on us with your game foot. You've done us both up, for Spangler is sure of ten years for the cottage affair, and the deuce knows how many more when the Government takes him in hand, while I'm out of the fortune I expected to make."

"I don't see that you're entitled to any sympathy," replied Jack, boldly. "You knew what you were up against when you undertook crooked work."

"You evidently didn't know what you were up against when you stuck your oar into our business," gritted Wambold, with a black look.

"I did my duty and I'm not worrying about the consequences."

"You crow mighty loud for a young rooster; but I guess your crowing won't last much longer. Do you realize that you're in my power?"

"I probably am through treachery."

"The end justifies the means. What's to prevent me from killing you right here in this room?" added Wambold, taking a revolver from his pocket.

"Nothing, I suppose, if you've got murder in your heart," replied Jack, with a coolness which he did not altogether feel.

The rascal appeared a bit disconcerted because he showed no signs of fear.

"You'd better flop down on your knees and beg for your life instead of talking back to me."

"I guess it wouldn't do me any good," retorted Jack, "for you've probably made up your mind to do me up somehow."

"Right you are. However, I'm not going to shoot you. The report of a revolver might bring a policeman here, and that wouldn't suit us. I never make use of firearms when the same object can be reached by other and just as effective means. The river flows under that window. What more simple way of silencing you forever than to bind and gag you, tie a few pounds of old pig iron to your legs and launch you into the stream? One splash, which would not be noticed, and you would disappear forever from the world. How do you like that prospect, eh?"

The speaker grinned sardonically.

Jack didn't like the prospect a bit, but being grit to the backbone he wasn't going to show the white feather before this rascal.

If he was fated to die he would take his medicine like a man, but he did not intend to yield up his life without a struggle.

"I asked you how you liked the idea of a cold bath this evening," continued Wambold, angry because his threat failed to unnerve his victim.

"How would you like it?" retorted Jack, in clear-cut tone.

"I wouldn't like it any more than you do."

"You've got to die some day, and if you have a murderer in your soul, you'll be worse off than I am at this moment," replied Jasper.

"No preaching, young man. I don't believe in none of your psalm-singing nonsense of a hereafter of fire and brimstone. When we're dead that's the end of us. You'll see your fish in a few minutes. As I suppose you're looking for a harp and a pair of wings in the hereafter you might mumble over a few prayers to pave the way ahead. I haven't any objection to you shuffling off in your own way if it will make you feel any happier. I'll be satisfied to know that we are quits."

During this interview the tough chap stood with his back against the bolted door, apparently unconcerned as to his connection with an affair that looked as if it was to end with a murder.

"Get that piece of rope in the next room, Higgins, and bind this chap. If he resists I'll help you," said Wambold.

The tough left the door and stepped into the adjoining room.

Jack instantly saw a chance for his life.

He stooped quickly, picked up a stool from the floor and flung it with an underhand swing at Wambold.

Then he made a dash for the door.

As he drew the bolt the rascal, who had evaded the stool by an agile jump to one side, sprang forward, grabbed him by the arm and pulled him back.

"Not so fast, my young friend," he cried; "we don't part company that way."

He swung the struggling Jack around with one hand, a finding that the boy was too much for such a grip he dropped his revolver on the table beside the lamp and seized him with both hands.

"Quick with that rope, Higgins. This boy is as strong as a young bull."

As he spoke the corridor door opened and Ben Burling, who had been listening and preparing for action outside, rushed in.

He snatched the revolver from the table and pointed it at Wambold's head.

"Throw up your hands or I'll put a ball through your head, you rascal," he cried, in a ringing tone.

At that moment Higgins appeared at the door with the rope.

He was staggered by the change in the situation.

Instead of coming to Wambold's side he darted back into the room, and making his way to a side door, let himself out into the corridor and ran downstairs.

Reaching the sidewalk he uttered a shrill, peculiar whistle which soon brought several of his gang from their lounging place outside a neighboring saloon.

Hurriedly explaining matters, he led them upstairs to Wambold's assistance.

The counterfeiter was taken completely by surprise by the unexpected appearance and quick action of Ben Burling.

The tables had been turned on him so rapidly that it took away his breath.

"Let go of that boy and throw up your hands or I shoot as sure as I live this minute," spoke Ben again.

There was no doubt but he meant what he said, and with an imprecation of rage Wambold let Jasper go.

"Now, up with your hands, you scoundrel, and back up against yonder wall."

Wambold, trembling with fury at the desperate predicament he realized he was in, reluctantly obeyed, for his life was of more importance to him than anything else.

"You came just in time to save me, Ben," said Jack, with a feeling of deep gratitude toward his chum. "You must have followed me into the building."

"I did, because I more than suspected that you were walking into some kind of a trap. See if you can find something with which to tie this villain. Then we'll get the police to attend to him," replied Ben.

At that moment there came the sounds of many feet along the corridor outside.

The door was thrown open and Higgins and five of his gang entered the room.

Wambold welcomed their appearance with a thrill of satisfaction.

"Seize those chaps!" he shouted.
"Stand back!" cried Ben, swinging the revolver around and hanging it to bear on the toughs.

Higgins and his gang paused, for they were not anxious to stop a bullet.

Ben saw that notwithstanding the advantage rested on his side the situation was a critical one.

He and Jack could hardly hope to escape by way of the street with so many to contest their retreat.

"Open the window yonder, Jack," he said, "and see if we can get out that way."

While Ben held the enemy in check with his weapon Jasper rang up the window and looked out.

"There is no escape this way except by jumping into the river," said Jack.

"Jump then and I'll follow you," replied Ben, backing toward his friend.

"Stop them!" shouted Wambold.

The toughs made a move to dash forward.

Ben fired straight at them and Higgins fell back with a cry of pain.

The bullet had passed through his hip. The shot created confusion in the ranks of the enemy, and under cover of it and the smoke, Jack and Ben sprang in succession from the window into the dark and flowing waters of the Salmon River.

CHAPTER XI.

TREATS OF THE RESULT OF JACK'S VISIT TO ADAM GRIMES.

They sank like a pair of cannon balls, but came up quickly. Both were good swimmers, and as soon as they located each other, they began striking out for the nearest wharf.

As they started off they glanced up at the second story window through which they had made their leap and saw it filled by the forms of the toughs.

Reaching the wharf, they easily climbed up to the string-piece and then stepped on to the planks.

"We had a close call that time," said Ben, rubbing the water from his eyes.

"I had the closest one," replied Jack. "Only that you came to my aid I'm afraid I never would have seen another sunrise. I owe you a debt of gratitude I never can repay."

"I'll never try to collect it," laughed Ben. "Now, step out lively. We must get away from this locality and keep our blood moving at the same time. We'll jog-trot it all the way home, and then we won't catch cold."

They started through the river front of the town at a smart gait, taking care, however, to give Whitehall street a wide berth; and their wet and bedraggled appearance attracted some attention from many of the pedestrians they met along their route.

In due time they reached Burling's cottage, when Ben dropped out of the race after bidding Jack good-night.

Not wishing to alarm his mother and sister with a recital of his experiences that night, Jasper entered the house by way of the woodshed roof and the window of his room.

Undressing and giving himself a good rub-down, Jack got into a dry outfit and then made his way back to the yard.

Giving the gate a slam to announce his coming, he entered the house as if nothing of a startling nature had occurred to him, and neither his mother nor sister noticed anything unusual about him.

Next morning he called on Ben and they went to the police station together and told their story.

Officers were sent to investigate No. 16 Whitehall street, but Wambold had in the meantime made himself scarce, while the Higgins gang prudently retired to their hiding places to wait till things blew over.

During the afternoon Jack sent a note to Bessie Bannister explaining why he had not called at the cottage on the night before as arranged, and telling her that he would surely be around that evening to see her uncle about the canal route.

He sent the letter by the son of a neighbor.

The boy brought back word that Mr. Grimes would be at home, and would look for him to call.

Jack called soon after supper and Bessie admitted him.

"My uncle is expecting you," she said. "He is in his room. Follow me."

She led him upstairs to the front apartment, knocked at the door, and Adam Grimes said, "Come in."

Jack entered the room and was greeted in a friendly way by the old man.

"Sit down," said Mr. Grimes. "My niece told me that you wanted to see me on a matter of business."

"I do. It is about the canal, the rights to which you control."

"I will hear what you have to say."

"I am out of work, with no immediate prospect of getting another situation. The strike on the Centerport branch of the D. & G. road has put a plan in my head by which I think I could build up a good business if you were willing to back me. I have no capital to invest, therefore without your help I can do nothing."

"Well," replied the old man, "let me hear what your plan is, and how you propose to work it. If I think it feasible I promise to help you out."

"I propose to put the canal route into commission once more. While the strike is on it will relieve the business situation at Centerport if merchandise can be carried to Eastlake and reshipped there by rail. The strike has also tied up the Esmeralda Copper Mines. I have no doubt that if the boats were put in operation a profitable contract could be made with the mining company to transport its ore to Eastlake until the strike was broken or settled, and possibly afterward. As things stand now I could make my own rates. My first object would be to make hay while the sun shone, after that I would try to continue carrying freight on the best terms obtainable."

"Your idea is good," said the old man. "Go on."

"I would make an arrangement with the Lake Cadillac Transportation Company to carry the boats and lighters across the lake from Jordan to Eastlake and back. I am sure I could make good terms with the company, for its business is scarcely more than paying expenses at present."

The old man nodded approvingly.

"Then I would call on the leading shippers at Centerport and contract to carry their merchandise at a fair price down the river to the canal, through that route to Jordan, and across the lake to Eastlake. I would advertise in the Centerport and Camden papers, also in the Eastlake papers, for I should want to carry back goods bound for Camden and Centerport that could not get through by rail. From the present outlook the strike is going to be a long and stubborn one. I propose to take advantage of the crippled state of the Centerport branch and get my hooks into their freight traffic as deep as I can."

Jack went on outlining and expanding his idea, and Adam Grimes became deeply interested in his project.

"Your venture has the elements of success in it, Jasper," he said, "and I am favorably disposed toward it."

"I am glad you approve of it, sir."

"You are going to take Ben Burling as your general assistant?"

"That is my idea."

"Your choice is a good one, for he is an honest, straightforward young fellow."

"I have always found him such, sir, and I have known him several years."

"Well, you can go ahead, Jasper. I will back you with funds enough to give you a good start, then it will be up to you to pull through."

"Thank you, sir," replied the overjoyed boy; "but it must be understood that the money is in the nature of a loan, to be repaid out of the anticipated profits of the venture. I shall feel more independent to have it that way. I will pay you rent for the use of the boats you own, and whatever you think is fair for the right-of-way through the canal."

"That is a fair and business-like proposition. I will have a contract drawn up which we will both sign. That will put the success or failure of your own venture right up to you. It will make you realize the responsibilities you have assumed in trying to make the business pay."

"Yes, sir. All I want is a fair chance to start the ball rolling. If I succeed it will be a satisfaction to know that I was not absolutely boosted into good luck through your backing alone."

"Your sentiments do you credit, Jasper, and make me feel all the more confident that you will come through with flying colors. I suppose you will start in at once."

"To-morrow morning, sir."

"I will loan you \$5,000 as a starter. Call here at eleven to-morrow and I'll have the money ready for you."

"I hope I will not need to expend so much as that, considering that you are going to let me have your boats and tugs."

"I will merely let you have the boats as they stand. You

will have to pay all the expenses of running them. I expect you will need more than \$5,000 to get on your feet; but no matter, all you have to do is call on me and I will supply you with the sinews of war. It will be up to you to turn my assistance to the best advantage."

"I'll do it, you may depend on," replied Jack, in a resolute tone.

That closed the interview and Jack went downstairs to acquaint Bessie with the result of his talk with her uncle.

She was delighted that her new friend's prospects looked rosy, and told him that she would watch his progress in his venture with the utmost interest.

Jack then went home, feeling that Dame Fortune was beckoning him onward with smiling face.

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH WAMBOLD GETS A PART OF WHAT'S COMING TO HIM.

Next morning Jack called at Ben's house to acquaint him with the result of his interview with Adam Grimes.

Ben was tickled to death at his young friend's success in getting around the old man, and congratulated him over his prospects.

"I shall expect you to be my right hand man, Ben," said Jack. "I can't pay you large wages at the start, but just as soon as things are running smoothly I will take care of you. You won't have to strike to get more money."

"I'll stand by you, Jack, and do my best to make your canal route to fortune a big success. Don't worry yourself about my wages. What do you expect me to do?"

"I shall want you to be my superintendent of transportation."

"That sounds pretty big," laughed Ben.

"It will be a responsible position. I shall look to you to see that the boats get through the canal all right and across to Eastlake. I shall probably have my hands full running things at Centerport, and exercising a general supervision over the business."

"When are you going to start in?"

"Right away. I'm going to meet Mr. Grimes in half an hour. He has promised to loan me enough money to get things under way. I want you to meet me at my house immediately after dinner. I'm going to take a boat through the canal to Jordan this afternoon to kind of blaze the way. At Jordan I'm going to call on the managers of the steam-boat company and make arrangements for the towing of boats across the lake to Eastlake and return. I shall introduce you as my master of transportation."

"I suppose I must put on my best suit?" said Ben.

"No, you must put on your worst one, as I intend to do, for we will alternate at driving the mule which will furnish the motive power. You can bring your best suit to put on after we reach Jordan," said Jack.

"All right, old man. What you say goes with me."

Jack then departed to keep his engagement with Adam Grimes.

The old man had the money ready, which he handed to Jack, with a promissory note to sign.

Mr. Grimes then took him to the basin, where nine canal-boats were in charge of a caretaker.

He introduced Jack to the man and told him that he had leased the boats to the boy, and that he was to take orders from Jasper until further notice.

"I'm going to take one of the boats through the canal this afternoon," said Jack. "Have a mule on hand all ready for work."

"All right," replied the man, respectfully.

"I will have the contract ready for you to sign in a few days," said the old man, as they walked away. "In the meantime you can go right ahead. Here is your letter of introduction to Mr. Cole, of the Lake Cadillac Steamboat Company; and here is a letter introducing you to my agent at Centerport, who has charge of my tugs there."

"Thank you, Mr. Grimes."

"When you are ready to call on the manager of the Esmeralda Copper Mines I will get you a letter of introduction from the president of our national bank, which will pave your way for an interview."

"Much obliged."

"You can use the old company's office near the basin for your quarters in this town. There is a long shed to protect freight from the rain."

After leaving Mr. Girmes, Jack went to the office of "Daily Times" and inserted the following advertisement:

SHIPPERS TAKE NOTICE.

On and after Monday, April 1, Mdse. of all kinds will be carried to Jordan and Eastlake via the Canal Route and Lake Cadillac, daily, at LOW RATES

For particulars call at the office of the Canal Transportation Co., at the Canal Basin, foot of Forrest Street. JOHN JASPER, General Manager

He left an order with a local printer for similar handb which he intended to have distributed among the shippers Camden and vicinity.

Then he went home to dinner.

Jack had finished his dinner when Ben and his sister peared.

"Say, Jack, Millie wants to go to Jordan with us on canal boat. Have you any objection?" asked Ben.

"Not the slightest. You will be as welcome as the flow in May, Millie," replied Jasper.

"Thanks, Jack," laughed the girl. "I knew that I wouldn't turn me down."

"Well, we'll get on, then, as the trip, though a short rou will take us about all the afternoon. We'll stay over nig aboard at Jordan, but there is plenty of accommodation you. You shall have the honor of cooking for us, or perha I should say that the honor will be ours of partaking of yo admirable culinary efforts."

They started for the basin and found one of the canalbo at the entrance to the canal, ready to proceed on its way ver Jordan.

The stout mule which was to do the drawing was tied bo a tree.

Millie was assisted aboard and Ben followed.

Jack unloosed the animal, attached the tow-rope to h and cried, "Gee-up!"

He started off as unconcernedly as though he had nev done anything else in his life but haul canal-boats, wh Jack, with a long switch, followed after him.

Ben and Millie seated themselves in the bow, and for w while kept up a running conversation with Jack.

For the first mile everything went on well, and Jasper h go no trouble with the mule.

The boat was now approaching the old mill, and wou have to pass under the bridge.

Ben had gone aft for some purpose and Jack was aboa to call him forward to haul in the tow-rope as soon as da detached it from the mule to allow the boat to shoot t bridge, when a man suddenly sprang out from a bunch en bushes and rushed at Jasper.

The boy instantly recognized him as Wambold, but bei off his guard, he was unable to put himself in a posture defence before the rascal was upon him.

"I'll fix you, you young viper!" hissed Wambold, closin with Jack, and trying to force him into the canal.

Millie uttered a shrill scream which attracted her brothe attention.

He grasped a boat-hook and ran forward to Jack's assistance.

Jasper almost lost his balance, and would have been m easy victim but for his agility.

He managed to slip around, sink to his knees and grar Wambold by the thighs.

Before the fellow dreamed what was going to happen, Jat got a good hold on his legs, swung him around, and, exercing all his strength, pitched him headforemost into the cana

There was a loud splash and Wambold sank out of sight

Ben uttered a shout of satisfaction and looked at the spb where the man had disappeared.

Wambold reappeared almost immediately, for the watth was not deep in the canal.

The side of the canal was only a yard from where hse came up, and a couple of strokes brought him to it.

Jack, in the meantime, had to turn his attention to de taching the mule from the tow-line, as the bridge was at hand.

It had been arranged that Ben was to come to shore afte tossing the line back to Jasper as soon as the bow of th boat passed clear of the bridge.

He made the toss, which Jack caught, and then he ra back, grabbed hold of the bridge and swung himself up on id

Jasper hitched on the mule again and ran back toward t

ridge, where he met Ben, handed him the switch, and was just in time to drop down on the roof of the boat's cabin as the long craft passed clear of a wooden link that connected the two sides of the canal near the mill.

Wambold had gotten out of the water, and breathing vengeance against Jasper had made a second rush for him, when he found that the boy was now out of his reach.

Dripping and swearing like a trooper, he remained on the ridge and looked after the boat with an ominous gaze.

Finally he shook his fist at it and started for the mill, within the entrance of which Jack saw him disappear.

CHAPTER XIII.

N WHICH JACK OUTLINES THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE CANAL ROUTE.

"Who was that man and what did he attack you for?" asked Millie Burling.

"You remember that two men attempted to rob Adam Grimes's house and that one of them was captured while the other escaped?" replied Jack.

"Yes."

"Well, that's the chap who escaped."

"Oh! He tried to throw you into the canal."

"That seemed to be his object, but I turned the tables on him, and he went in himself instead," laughed Jack.

"He was awful mad, wasn't he?" smiled the girl.

"Yes, he looked kind of mad. As a rule, people don't feel very good after getting the short end of things."

"Say, Jack," said Ben from the shore, "that was Wambold, wasn't it?"

"Yes, that was him all right."

"He's hanging around to reach you again. You'll have to send word to the police when we get back."

"I intend to, but it's likely he'll expect me to do that and will skip out to avoid capture."

"Looked to me as if he wanted to drown you in the canal."

"He certainly intended to throw me in, but the trick worked like a boomerang."

"You got out of your predicament very neatly, while he got more than he bargained for."

"He may get worse than that if he tackles me again," replied Jack.

The sun was sinking below the distant horizon when the canal-boat reached the end of the route at the town of Jordan.

Jack and Ben moored her in the basin, which was large enough to contain several boats like her, and stabled the mule in a small barn close by, which belonged to Mr. Grimes.

It was too late for Jack to attend to the business that had brought him over there, so it was postponed till morning.

He went ashore and purchased a supply of provisions, which Millie cooked in her best style.

They remained on deck talking about the new canal enterprise and other matters till nine o'clock, when they turned in for the night, there being a separate compartment for Millie to sleep in.

Next morning Jack and Ben put on their best clothes and about nine o'clock started for the office of the navigation company.

Mr. Cole, the manager, was in his private room when they arrived.

Jack sent in their names and they were admitted. He handed Mr. Cole the letter of introduction he had brought, and then stated the object of his visit.

The manager was clearly surprised to learn that traffic through the canal was to be revived, and was pleased to hear that the co-operation of the steamboat company seemed to be a necessary factor in the plan.

He was ready to talk business with Jack, who introduced Ben as his superintendent of transportation, and they got together at once.

Jack wanted lower terms than the steamboat manager seemed disposed to give, but after a spirited talk they reached a compromise satisfactory to both sides.

"I'm going over to Eastlake on your noon boat," said Jack, "and will return by the last boat. Have a contract drawn up ready for me to sign by the time I get back, so that our business can be settled up ship-shape."

On their return trip to Camden, Jack told Ben that it would be his business to see that the boats kept moving, not only through the canal, but across the lake to Eastlake, and vice versa.

"You will see to it that my agents at Camden, Jordan and Eastlake attend to business right up to the mark," went on Jack. "You must visit shippers in Camden who regularly send merchandise East, and make them understand that the canal route has advantages for them at all times, whether the railroad on the west shore is running or not. You must see Eastlake shippers who send goods to Centerport, and solicit their trade for the canal route. In fact, I rely on you to keep this end of my transportation business going in good shape."

"You're going to locate yourself at Centerport, eh?" said Ben.

"Yes, for that is the keystone of the situation. It is a big shipping point, and I shall fight to get and control as much business as I can handle from there. I will be in touch with the Esmeralda mines at that point, and if I secure a good contract from that quarter it behooves me to look after it and see that everything works smoothly in the direction of Camden, where it comes under your supervision."

"You talk like a general laying out a campaign."

"That's about what I'm doing. I'm laying out a business campaign."

CHAPTER XIV.

DESCRIBES JACK'S PROGRESS WITH HIS CANAL ROUTE.

Early next morning Jack crossed the river to Lath and hired a rig to take him up to Centerport, a distance of fifty miles.

He reached his destination early in the afternoon and registered at one of the hotels.

The first thing he did was to call on Mr. Ball, Mr. Grimes' agent, and present his letter of introduction.

He explained as much of his plans as he considered necessary, and the agent told him he thought the idea a good one as long as the strike on the railroad continued, but he did not see that the scheme would pay after that.

He told Jack that the tugs were at his service, and that he could have one or all of them whenever he was ready to use them.

Jack told him to send one tug down the river to Camden right away.

As soon as it arrived at that town Ben had orders to send it back with six canal-boats in tow.

Sending the first two boats through the canal, Jack paid a hurried visit to his mother and sister.

Then he called at the Adam Grimes home, and was warmly welcomed by the old man and Bessie.

He recounted to Mr. Grimes all he had done so far, and explained what he still had to do to put his plan into full working order.

"That's the right way. Well, I have the contract ready for you to sign in duplicate, and that will complete the arrangements between us."

"All right, sir. I am going on to Eastlake to make a traffic arrangement with the P. & Q. line. I will only ship goods over the D. & G. where shippers insist, as the P. & Q. covers all points East as well as the other road."

Jack then explained his plans for the future, by which he hoped to control traffic even after the strike was over.

Mr. Grimes was pleased at his foresight.

"You seem to have hit the keynote of the situation," he said. "The P. & Q. people will jump at this chance to cut in on the business of its rival. With the support and prestige of that road at your back, success ought to be assured. When are you going to call on the manager of the copper mines?"

"As soon as I've got things in perfect working order. I'm going to ask the general freight agent of the P. & Q. for special rates on copper ore on the ground that this is the chance for his company to secure the carriage of the output of the Esmeralda mines, of which the D. & G. road has heretofore enjoyed the monopoly. I am satisfied I will thus be able to quote a lower schedule to the manager of the mines than he has been getting from the D. & G. road."

Jack signed the contract by which he took a lease of all the property and rights of the old canal company now vested in Adam Grimes, and then went downstairs to have

a brief talk with Bessie before starting for Jordan on horseback by way of the roundabout road.

"You're a busy boy now," said Bessie, with a smile.

"I should say I am, Miss Bessie. I've got just as much, if not more, than I can attend to. I've got a line of operation to look after extending from Centerport on the north to Eastlake on the southeast; but then I've got an able assistant in Ben Burling. I feel I can thoroughly depend on him, and that's a whole lot at this stage of the game."

"I hope you will write to me when you are not able to come on here, for I want to keep informed of your progress," she said.

"I will gladly do that. And now I guess I'll have to go. It is getting late and I have to ride over to Jordan after supper so as to meet the boats when they arrive at that place."

Bessie went to the door with him, and their parting was of the friendliest kind.

CHAPTER XV.

IN WHICH JACK IS HELD UP ON THE ROAD TO JORDAN.

Jack started for Jordan directly after an early supper at his home, and as his road led by the mill, on the opposite of the canal, he wondered whether Wambold was still in the vicinity.

Immediately after his return from Jordan on the canal-boat he had notified the Camden police of his run-in with the rascal on the bank of the canal near the old mill, and officers were sent out to look him up again.

They failed to find him, though they searched the mill from cellar to roof, and the neighborhood pretty thoroughly also.

Jack, however, had the idea that Wambold was not very far away.

It was nearly dark by this time, but that fact didn't worry Jasper any, for he knew the road well, and there was no danger of losing his way.

Suddenly a figure jumped out into the road before him and waved his arms and hat in a wild way, like a person trying to stop a runaway.

Jack's horse was frightened by the apparition and reared up.

The man, whoever he was, sprang forward and seized the animal by the bridle.

"What in thunder is the matter with you?" demanded Jasper, wondering if he had run across an escaped lunatic.

"Get down," cried the stranger, in a menacing voice. "Get down or I'll blow your head off."

Jack looked keenly at the fellow through the gloom, and then it flashed across the boy's mind that he was up against Wambold again.

He saw that the fellow had a weapon in his hand, and matters looked serious.

"Are you going to get down of your own accord or shall I bring you down with this six-shooter?" said the man in an ugly tone.

"I'll get down," replied Jack, thinking of a plan to outwit the rascal.

"Then do it."

Jasper quickly dismounted, but it was on the opposite side of his horse.

The moment he got the animal between him and Wambold he drew his own revolver, and stepping around the horse, pointed it directly at the man.

"Let go of that bridle and git," he ejaculated.

The rascal was taken all aback.

"Drop that gun of yours, and drop it quick!" cried Jack.

Instead of obeying the fellow raised his arm and fired quickly.

The bullet shaved the boy's ear.

The smoke had hardly cleared from the revolver before Jasper returned the fire, and with better results.

The man staggered back and sank to the ground with a cry of pain.

As Jack stepped forward he heard the sound of wagon wheels approaching along the road.

Flashing a match, he knelt beside the wounded rascal.

The light also illuminated his own features.

"So it is you, is it?" snarled Wambold, in spite of the pain he was suffering.

"Do you mean to say that you didn't know me in the dark?" asked Jack.

Wambold's reply was a fierce imprecation.

"Are you hurt much?"

"You've hurt me enough," snarled the counterfeiter.

"I am sorry I had to shoot you; but I was obliged to do so in self-defense."

At that moment a rig approached them through the gloom, and the driver reined in with a sharp "Whoa!"

"Hello!" came a voice. "What's the trouble?"

"I've shot a highwayman," replied Jack.

"The dickens you have," ejaculated the driver, dismounting and coming forward.

"Are you going direct to town?" asked Jack.

"I am. May I ask who you are?"

"Jack Jasper. I live on the outskirts of Camden, beside the canal."

"Ah! You're the young chap who got hold of the counterfeit plates and turned them over to the government?"

"Yes," replied Jack, wondering who this man was, for he had not mentioned anything about the counterfeiting business to anybody save Ben Burling, his mother and sister, Adam Grimes, his niece and the Secret Service man, and he was pretty sure they had not spread the news about the

The town authorities were holding Spangler only on the charge of attempted burglary.

"Maybe this is the man I'm looking for," said the stranger, striking a match and taking a view of the wounded rascal.

"The man you're looking for!" ejaculated Jack, in surprise. "Who are you?"

"My name is Smith. I belong to the government Secret Service. I'm here on a still hunt after Dave Wambold, Spangler's associate in the counterfeiting business."

"Well, Mr. Smith, this is your man. This is Wambold," replied Jasper.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes."

He found that Wambold was not seriously injured.

"Help me put him into the wagon, Jasper," he said. "I've been around this locality for ten days looking for him. I'm much obliged to you for helping me bag him, and shall notice you favorably in my report to the Bureau. When the case is wound up against the two men the Treasury Department will doubtless reward your services in the matter."

Jack assisted the officer to put Wambold into the wagon where he was handcuffed as a matter of precaution.

The Secret Service man then bade the boy good-night and drove off toward Camden, while Jack remounted his horse and continued on his way toward Jordan, where he arrived in due time without further adventure.

Jack put up at a small hotel, and after breakfast next morning went over to the basin to have a talk with his agent.

He found the two canal-boats moored, waiting to be towed across the lake by a small steamer belonging to the navigation company.

Jack did not go with them, but took the regular steamer over, which landed him more than an hour ahead of the boats.

The first thing he did was to call on his Eastlake agent.

The young man told him he had had many applications from shippers to forward freight to Centerport, and he had made arrangements with all of them to handle their merchandise as soon as the service was fairly started.

He pointed out some freight that had already reached the wharf, and was covered with a spread of canvas.

"There will be two boats in here in the coarse of an hour," said Jack. "Start gangs at work unloading them the moment they arrive. At the same time send word to those shippers who have goods to forward to Centerport to get them down here as soon as possible. When the first boat is unloaded start men loading her with merchandise intended for Centerport. In the meantime get the trucks down here to cart the through freight to the railroad depots, but don't let any trucks get away until I telephone you."

As soon as he had finished with his agent Jack called on the local freight agent of the P. & Q. Railroad and had a long talk with him.

During the interview several despatches passed between the agent's office and the office of the general freight agent in Chicago, where the main offices of the company were situated.

Jack's proposition to throw all through freight from Centerport bound East into the hands of the P. & Q., particularly his intimation that he intended to try and secure a contract for carrying the output of the Esmeralda mines, captured the attention of the general freight agent, and he authorized the local agent to enter into a liberal traffic agreement for one year with the Canal Transportation Co.

Jack immediately telephoned his agent to forward all merchandise not specially marked D. & G. to the P. & Q. freight depot.

He then called at the D. & G. freight offices.

The agent was clearly surprised to learn of the revival of the old canal route, but presumed that it was merely a temporary expedient to relieve the freight blockade at Centerport.

After communicating with the general agent in Chicago, he made a satisfactory agreement with Jasper, the arrangement to terminate when the D. & G. road was able to move its freight trains once more over the Centerport branch.

Jack then phoned his agent to send all D. & G. freight to the depot of that road until further notice.

After dining, Jasper returned to the dock and found that the steamer was bringing in the third canal-boat from Centerport.

This was the one which had unloaded a part of its cargo at Camden, and a small portion at Jordan, but carried mostly through freight to Eastlake.

Returning to Jordan by an early afternoon boat, Jack rode back to Camden.

He called at the Grimes cottage after supper and reported his progress up to date to the old man.

"You have got things in shape in a mighty short time for so important an enterprise," said Mr. Grimes, with an approving smile.

"That's the way to do business, sir," replied the boy cheerfully.

"When are you going back to Centerport?"

"In the morning with the first two boats from Eastlake."

Jack found Bessie awaiting him in the sitting-room and he spent an hour with her, after which he went home.

He got an early breakfast and then rushed over to Ben's house.

Burling was expecting him, and they walked to the office near the canal basin.

Ben said he had been around among the people who had goods to ship East, and they expressed themselves as glad of the chance to send them by the canal route.

Since the strike had held up freight shipments several of the Camden manufacturers had been obliged to cart merchandise by road to Jordan, take it across the lake on the steamer and carry it to the depot in Eastlake.

"The shippers told me they would be glad to continue with the canal company even after the strike was settled if their goods could be delivered promptly at the freight yards in Eastlake, as this would save them the trouble of sending their wagons across to Lathrop by ferry, and the customary delays the wagons met with at the freight yard," said Ben.

"Well, all you have to do is to show them that we will carry all freight to Eastlake from this place a great deal quicker than they can get it around there by railroad via Lathrop," replied Jack. "Give it to them strong, old man. Now is the time to get our wedge in while the railroad is helpless."

While Jack was talking with Ben a messenger came to inform him that his presence would be required at court to testify against Wambold at his examination.

Jack was greatly vexed at this summons, but there was no way of evading it.

Three more boats full of freight had come down from Centerport late the previous afternoon, and Ben had sent them through the canal.

The remaining three boats would leave Centerport about the time that the two boats started up from Camden.

Jack figured that things were moving about as well as could be expected.

Two tugs would be enough to keep his boats moving up and down the river.

"Don't hold the boats for me, Ben," said Jack, as he prepared to start for the court. "I'll stay over till the next batch from Jordan comes through the canal."

"All right," replied Ben.

Jack went to court, gave his evidence against Wambold,

and returned to the basin to find that the two boats had arrived and departed an hour since.

Then he and Ben went home to dinner.

CHAPTER XVI.

CONCLUSION.

The three boats from Centerport were in sight when Jack and Ben got back to the basin.

"Crandall must have got the boats off early this morning, about daylight," remarked Jack. "That's the way I like to see business done. I think I am fortunate in my agents. Jenkins, of Eastlake, is a hustler, and Billy Brown, whom I sent to represent me at Jordan, appears to be all right."

When the three canal-boats arrived it was found that they carried nearly a dozen passengers who wanted to get to Eastlake.

Crandall had charged them \$2 fare, and had put provisions aboard so that they could dine at the rate of fifty cents a meal.

The captain of the tug brought a letter to Ben and another to be forwarded to Jasper if he wasn't at Camden.

The boats were full to their hatches and carried some light merchandise on their decks to be landed at Camden.

Word was received from Brown that one boat was on its way through the canal to Camden with freight for that town and Centerport.

It was expected to arrive about dark.

"Get a lot of naphtha torches and hire a night gang, Ben. I want her to go up the river to-night. I'm going with her," said Jack.

Jack reached Centerport at eight next morning and found the wharf stacked full of freight ready for shipment by the Canal Transportation Co.

The railroad situation was not much changed, though the company was trying to move trains with the help of the State militia.

Jasper was now ready to tackle the problem of the copper ore transit.

The mines had been compelled to shut down owing to the inability of the company to ship its product.

Jack visited the mines and made a proposition to the manager.

"I will agree to carry your ore to Eastlake and ship it via the D. & G. until the strike is over for so much a ton," he said, mentioning a stiff figure; "or I will enter into a year's contract with you, with a renewal clause, to carry all your output to Eastlake, and ship it East via the P. & Q. for such a price," naming a fair rate. "Take your choice, or turn both down, as you choose."

"If I give you a contract that will cut the D. & G. road out entirely," replied the manager.

"What do you care? The D. & G. has put you in a hole. The P. & Q. is just as big and important a line as the D. & G. My transportation company is the link that will connect you permanently with the P. & Q."

"But a canal route is slower than molasses."

"My canal route is short and direct. It takes thirty hours at the best for the D. & G. to carry a train of ore from these mines as far as Eastlake. I'll do as well and include transshipment."

"I must submit your proposition to the president of the mine at Centerport."

On the following afternoon a messenger called at the office of the Canal Transportation Co. and told Jasper he was wanted at the general offices of the Esmeralda Copper Mines, on Washington street.

He called there and was ushered into a room, where he found the manager and the president.

The latter questioned Jack closely.

He had already telegraphed the general freight agent of the P. & Q. at Chicago to know if the road would back up the Canal Transportation Co.

A reply came while they were talking.

The general freight agent said that the company had a traffic agreement with the canal company, and that he would guarantee the carriage of ore from tidewater at the mine to all points east on a two years' contract made between the Esmeralda Company and Jack Jasper.

The president of the mine, after some further discussion, authorized the manager to enter into the said contract with the Coal Transportation Co.

With the contract for carrying the whole output of the Esmeralda mines in his possession, Jack's canal venture became an assured success.

The officials of the D. & G. road were paralyzed when they learned about it.

They compromised the trouble with their employees, and when the strike was declared off the company called on the Esmeralda Mining Company to fulfil its contract, which had yet many months to run.

The president of the mine replied that not only was the contract broken, but that the company was about to sue the D. & G. road for damage incurred through the delay in the forwarding of several train loads of copper ore.

The railroad brought a counter suit, but lost in both cases after months of time spent in appeals to higher courts.

The D. & G. road, in the meantime, was chagrined to see thousands of tons of copper ore tapped in its own territory by its rival, the P. & Q., through the instrumentality of Jack Jasper and his canal route.

Not only that, but Jack held onto nearly all the big Centerport shippers after the strike, which was another body blow for the D. & G. line.

The company cut rates down in a futile attempt to put the canal route out of business.

The profit Jack made out of the copper transit enabled him to meet every cut made by the railroad company.

In the end the railroad had to throw up its hands and share the Centerport business with the Canal Transportation Co.

By that time Jack was quite an important person in the transportation business.

He was making big money and saving it with visions of expanding his facilities and gathering in more trade.

With the help of Adam Grimes he bought the Lake Cadillac Transportation Co., and added it to his system, thus making his line complete between Centerport and Eastlake.

To-day Jack Jasper is a big man out West, and his name is often seen in the daily press.

The canal route is out of business, as an improved trans-

portation arrangement, devised by Jack, is in operation between Eastlake and Centerport via the old route.

Jack owns two big specially constructed ferryboats, of which carries freight trains across Lake Cadillac between Eastlake and Jordan.

Five miles of railroad follow the course of the old car from Jordan to Camden, and the cars are run direct from the boat to the tracks.

The rail line then runs north fifty miles to the new town of Egypt, opposite Centerport, where the cars are taken across the river in the second big ferryboat.

Jack also leased the road running to the copper mine from the D. & G. company, which had no use for it after the boy had cut them out of the copper traffic.

Jasper is president of the company which owns the rail road and ferryboats.

The company carries passengers between Centerport and Eastlake, via a regular ferry across the Salmon River at Egypt, thence by rail to Jordan, and by boat to Eastlake, but its main business is in freight.

All the freight cars bear the initials of the P. & Q. road and it simply acts as a connecting link for the P. & Q. line and its profits come from the charge per car it receives from the trunk line for carrying the cars between Centerport and Eastlake.

Jack lives in a fine house in Camden, and the charming lady who presides over it was once Bessie Bannister, whom Adam Grimes left all his money when he died.

We must not forget to mention that Jack received a reward of \$5,000 from the government for capturing the counterfeit plates, but that came to him at the beginning of his successful canal venture, and helped to make him independent when he needed money to meet the big expenses of the canal route, which ultimately led to his fortune.

Next week's issue will contain "AFTER BIG MONEY OR, TURNING THE TABLES ON THE WALL STREET BROKERS."

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In a short time a million checks a month will be issued from the Bureau of War-Risk Insurance to the families of the men constituting America's fighting force.

There had been up to January 18, 1918, 473,116 applications for total insurance of \$4,011,391,000. The average amount applied for still keeps near the maximum of \$10,000. A steady effort is being made to make our fighting forces "100 per cent. insured," and there are many military units in which every member is insured and in some of them every man insured for the maximum of \$10,000.

The automatic insurance granted by the law ceases on February 12, but by that time it is hoped that our whole military and naval forces will be "100 per cent. insured," with the result that the family or dependents of everyone having a family or anyone dependent on him will be provided with a monthly allowance, and insurance in case of his death, and the member himself, if disabled, will receive a monthly allowance, and if totally disabled, will receive in addition rehabilitation and special education and training to fit him for some work.

The efforts of the Treasury Department to have every member of the military and naval forces insured under this law can be greatly assisted by the people at home of the soldiers and sailors if they will join in urging them to take out the insurance offered.

THE SCHOOLS AND THE TREASURY.

The tremendous effective national service that the schools and school children of the country can render is being availed of as fully as possible by the Treasury Department in its work. In a great number of schools Liberty Loan clubs have been organized, and many bonds also have been purchased by individual pupils. The War-Savings campaign is endeavoring to have a War-Savings club established in every school in the country, and organized and individual effort is to be stimulated in every way.

Secretary McAdoo has said that he would like to see every schoolhouse in the United States an open forum, where patriotism and loyalty are taught, and a center of national service in its community and among its pupils and patrons. The school as a medium to reach the people of the rural districts is of especial value.

URGES SOUTH TO PRODUCE MORE FOOD.

Secretary McAdoo, as Director General of the Railroads, has issued a statement declaring that the production by each section of the United States of

its own food and feed stuff would be much more economical and would effect a great relief in the transportation problem.

He urges upon the people of the South, especially the farmers, to relieve the strain on the railroads as much as possible during the coming year by producing their own food and feed crops, thus rendering unnecessary the transportation of such materials from other parts of the country to them.

The Secretary emphasizes the fact that he does not suggest that the growing of cotton should be discouraged, but that the South, in addition to raising all the cotton that it can well cultivate, should grow hay and corn for its stock and produce as much food as possible for its own people.

He says, "If the South can feed itself, the effect will be to release from unnecessary service in the South a vast number of freight cars and engines and greatly help to win the war."

WHEATLESS PIE DOUGH.

A wheatless pie dough, made of ten pounds of barley flour, one and a half pounds of shortening, five ounces of salt, and about two and a half pints of cold water, is reported to the Hotel World by the chef of the Daniel Boone Tavern, Columbia, Mo., who states that barley flour has a percentage of oil in itself which measurably decreases the shortening requirements.

A CONSERVATION BUN.

Through the West a popular form of conservation bread has been a special raisin bun made, according to a formula evolved by a Los Angeles baker and indorsed by the Raisin Growers' Association of California. Sweetening in this bun is secured from raisins, so that no sugar is needed, and the flour used is a mixture of rye, rice, and wheat.

BAKING ADVANTAGES OF OATMEAL AND ROLLED OATS.

A large cereal concern recommends that rolled oats and oatmeal be pushed by wholesale grocers and commercial bakers as an ingredient in mixed breads, citing the following technical and trade advantages in a circular: First, rolled oats and oatmeal are more easily obtained than their substitute ingredients; second, rolled oats or oatmeal will absorb far more water than wheat flour and retain it longer; third, they are as cheap as any other ingredient which is available; fourth, the oatmeal loaf is said to have a greater nutritive value than even a straight wheat flour, and far greater than a corn-meal or barley-flour mixture.

TWO FOR A CENT

—OR—

THE CHEAPEST BOY ON EARTH

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY.)

CHAPTER XXII (Continued).

"I think you did, sir."

"Will you kindly close it soon and make sure that it is locked?"

"Yes, sir; certainly."

Yet Milt did not start at once, for the old gentleman had said "soon," and there really did not seem to be any rush.

Truth to tell, the boy was thinking hard of something else just then.

Three days before he had mailed a letter to Annie Irving, telling her where he and Chub were now. He had also begged Annie not to believe the dark things about him that had appeared to be true. He had promised her that some day he would convince her that he was as honest and straightforward as she could want him to be. He had wound up by begging Annie to send him a cheering letter.

"I wonder if she'll write?" Milt muttered. "Or does she believe, now, that I am as big a scoundrel as some other folks think me?"

Meanwhile, the red-whiskered prowler outside the open study window had heard Judge Hepworth's hail.

Just an instant this stranger hesitated. Then cautiously he crept in through the open window.

He pulled open the safe-door, taking a hasty survey of the contents.

"This 'll do," he chuckled, as he drew out a small package of government bonds.

On tiptoe the prowler went to the study-door, through which he had already seen our hero's coat hanging.

He slipped the bonds into Milt's inner pocket, then folded the coat over carelessly so that the bonds did not appear at a first glance.

"If that young cub comes in and locks the safe, and doesn't know how to open it again, he'll have trouble trying to explain what he'll find in his pocket," grinned the prowler, as he went out through the window again. "If he gets rattled and doesn't try to give the bonds back, then he'll be suspected, anyway, and perhaps caught. That will settle one butter-in!"

From which it would be inferred that the prowler was Mr. Perkins, well-disguised, and still on the track of vengeance, ready to punish Chub through his chum.

After a few minutes Milt roused from his dream with a start.

"The safe!" he exclaimed to himself. "I said I close it."

He went quickly into the study, shut the safe-door securely, and caught the lock.

"There, that's closed well enough now," muttered the boy. He left the house, going through tall grounds to seek Chub.

Some minutes later a stoop-shouldered, heavy-jawed, seam-faced man trudged up the long drive, way without being seen by our hero.

Arrived at the front door, and his ring being answered by a servant, the latter took the name that he gave up to Judge Hepworth.

"Job Whaxter?" mused the old gentleman. "Say that I'll come down. Show him into my study, please."

Three minutes later the old judge descended the stairs, made his way to the study, and greeted the caller.

Job was gotten up carefully in his Sunday best, yet, at his best, he looked strangely out of place in the study of a gentleman.

"I s'pose ye don't know who I am," began Job. "But I've heard something that makes it my bounden duty to come to you."

"You look like a man who could be depended upon to do his duty," commented Judge Hepworth.

"Thank ye kindly, jedge. Well, I've heerd that you've got a young scalawag here named Milt Bradlock."

"A—a what?" demanded Judge Hepworth.

"A young scalawag, I said! Oh, ye needn't stare and look at me that way, jedge. I know what I'm talking about. I got him out of the almshouse, and raised Milt Bradlock, up to a few weeks ago. I knew all about him and his doings. He did me dirty, and he and a feller named Chub Eastman that's also here, I've heerd, are both wanted over in Westford for tryin' to rob Mr. Miller, one o' my neighbors. I've told Miller, and he may have the constables here pretty soon. I know all about Milt Bradlock, jedge. I heerd he was here through my niece, Annie Irving, that's some sweet on Milt. As for Milt, he's——"

"It seems to me that if I am to listen to you,

terrupted the judge stiffly, "young Bradlock ould be here, too."

"Oh, call him, thne," agreed Job. "I can face him, guess, a heap sight easier'n he'll want to face me!" Opening his study-door, the judge saw Grace passg through the hallway.

"Grace," he called, "if you can find Milt, ask him step here. I have a caller whom he ought to see." Grace hurried outside, calling. Our hero soon heard and answered.

"Father has a caller in his study that he wants ou to meet," Grace announced.

Thanking her, Milt hurried into the house. As e passed his coat, hanging on the nail, he took it own.

Just then the old judge, hearing his step, threw open the study-door.

"Come in, Milt," he called, pleasantly. "We have caller."

Milt swung his coat around to draw it on. As he did so the package of bonds slipped out, falling at the judge's feet.

"What are these? Papers of yours?" queried the old man, bending and picking them up.

Of a sudden Judge Hepworth straightened himself, looking first at the papers, then searchingly into our hero's face.

"Well, sir?" queried Milt.

"I—I don't understand this," faltered Judge Hepworth. "Why, Milt, these are governments bonds that I left in my safe. I asked you to close and lock the safe! What can this mean?"

"I'm blessed if I know, sir!" ejaculated the boy, staring dumbly at the accusing papers.

"There! What did I tell ye, jedge?" roared Job Whaxter, leaping forward. "This ain't the first time Milt Bradlock's done wrong. He sold me out. I'd betray any friend on earth."

"But I don't know anything about these bonds, sir," faltered Milt, taking them in his own hand and staring at them helplessly. "If you think I took em from the safe, sir, I didn't, and I don't know how they came to be in my coat."

A carriage had drawn up at the door. Three people stood looking in.

"He's a thief! Caught right red-handed!" roared Job Whaxter.

A cry from one of the three people at the door made Milt wheel about.

There were Bob Hubbard and his daughter Millie, and—

It was Annie Irving who had uttered that cry.

"A thief, jedge!" rang out Job Whaxter's triumphant voice. "There ain't no mistake about it. Allus said Milt Bradlock was the cheapest boy on earth."

CHAPTER XXIII.

BETWEEN THE LAW'S FINGERS.

"Pardon me, my man," suggested Judge Hepworth, a trifle tartly. "Will you be good enough to be quiet and orderly?"

"Wh—wh—what's that, jedge?" gasped Job Whaxter, thunderstruck.

"Will you be good enough to make less noise here?" demanded the old gentleman.

"But I—I—"

"Be good enough to be silent, or else leave my house. It appears that we have business on hand here—"

"Of course we have," broke in Job; though his voice was meeker under the judge's stern gaze. "We—"

"You have nothing to do with the business, as nearly as I can discover," went on Judge Hepworth, irritably. Now please keep still, Mr. Whaxter, while I endeavor to find out what this all means."

Milt's ancient enemy, his mouth wide open and his eyes bulging, collapsed into a chair and sat looking staringly on.

With a milder look in his usually kind old eyes, Judge Hepworth turned toward Bob Hubbard's party at the doorway.

"May I inquire the object of your visit here, at this time?" he asked of Bob.

"Certainly," Mr. Hubbard replied. "This young man, Bradlock, and his friend Eastman, were employed by me, not long ago, as minor clerks in my hotel at Royalton. I was obliged to send them away under a cloud of dishonesty."

Job leaped to his feet.

"There! What'd I tell ye, jedge?" he demanded, in a voice hoarse with triumph.

"Silence, fellow!" almost roared Judge Hepworth.

"But this young lady here," went on Hubbard, "persuaded me to put her in my hotel office as cashier. She was there some weeks, but at last she discovered that my day clerk and manager, Abner Penrose, was robbing me steadily. She caught him well to rights, and then I made Penrose confess that he put up the jobs of robbery against Bradlock and Eastman, in revenge for their having caught him at some crooked tricks. Why, Penrose even went so far, in his fight against these boys, as to have a gambling friend of his who passed for a gentleman come to the hotel on purpose to be robbed of jewels. He passed jewels to Penrose, who slipped the jewelry into the pockets of the boys. We searched them in the office and so of course I felt sure that they were young thieves. But, thanks to Miss Irving, Penrose has been caught at new tricks, and has confessed all."

"Oh—Annie!" cried Milt, who had been glancing at his sweetheart with joy-wet eyes.

"I don't know what this scene here means, Bradlock," went on Hubbard, holding out his hand. "But I want to apologize for my suspicions of you!"

"I didn't blame you, even at the time," Milt replied.

"Humph!" put in Job Whaxter, in disgust. As he turned from shaking hands with Bob Hubbard Milt found Annie at his side.

(To be continued.)

CURRENT NEWS

Some ingenious workmen in Petrograd more than 175 years ago carved six cannon out of blocks of ice, turned them in lathes and bored them for six-inch shells. And they actually fired salutes from them. The ice was sufficiently strong to withstand the explosion of nearly 2,000 grains of real gunpowder.

The Dead Sea is about forty miles long, with an average breadth of nine miles. Its depth varies from 1,320 feet in the north to very shallow depths in the south. Its surface is 1,312 feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. The water of the Dead Sea is intensely salt, being eight times as salt as the ocean. As a consequence a human body cannot sink in the water. The sea has no known outlet.

In the last years of Washington's administration, the people of Western Pennsylvania started uprisings against the power of the excise authorities, known at the time as the "whisky insurrection." About the middle of 1799 General Neville, the chief excise officer, was attacked in his house and in other places valuable property was destroyed. There was a tumultuous meeting of the people at Washington, Pa., and a rally of armed men at Braddock's Field. The uprisings were brought to an end through the vigorous efforts of James Ross, a prominent lawyer of Washington, Pa., who had been elected a few months before to the United States Senate to fill out the unexpired term of Albert Gallatin.

There has been recently placed on the market an appliance for sterilizing drinking water. It is also said to remove taste, odor, color and hardness, and electrolysis is employed as the sterilizing agent. The appliance consists of a large glass jar, provided with a faucet and an electrode member. The latter consists of two plates which are wired to the nearest source of lighting current. In operation the jar is filled with water and the current turned on. Depending on the amount of electrolyte salts in the water, a gallon of water can be purified in from ten to thirty minutes, and five gallons can be handled at one filling.

The British authorities in India appear to have found in the aeroplane an effective cure for the perennial uprisings of border tribesmen. According to Aeronautics, a campaign against the Mahsuds, an unruly tribe inhabiting the "no man's land" between the frontier of India and the territory of the Amir of Afghanistan, was brought to a successful conclusion in a few weeks, early in 1917, with the aid of aeroplanes, which promptly discovered the

most secret assemblages of the tribesmen and ported them to headquarters. "The collection a advance of large bodies were watched and follow and when the moment for attack arrived the trib men's formations were broken up or destroyed low-flying aeroplanes dropping explosive bombs scattering them, or leaving them exposed to atta by the advancing British line." The aeroplane revolutionized the conditions of border warfare.

In submarine vessels explosions may occur either through a collection of gases from the batteries by reason of leaks in the pipes or tanks of the f supply system, or through bursting of the air flas belonging to the boat, or the air reservoirs in t automobile torpedoes. The greatest danger is fro explosive gases, which have been the cause of n explosions in modern submarine craft, and the greatest danger in this connection is the liability of a leak in the gasoline pipes or tanks, says t Book of Wonders. This gas is a heavy gas and o goes to the bottom of the vessel, where it is n so easily detected as a gas which rises. There no certain way of guarding against leaks of gase line. A leak may occur at any time in a pipe a tank of gasoline through some cause or other la matter how carefully inspected, and the gas fro this is so active that it will go through the tiniest hole imaginable—even through a hole which wat will not penetrate. The crew of a submarine is a ways subject to this danger unless the tanks a built outside the hull of the ship.

A phalanx in ancient Greece was a body of so diers, from 8 to 16 ranks deep, and armed with lances 14 to 18 feet long. Their shields joined, and their pikes crossed each other, to make it difficult for a foe to break the compact mass. At first phalanx consisted of 4,000 men, but this number was afterward doubled by Philip, of Macedon, and the double phalanx is hence often called the Macedonian phalanx. A grand phalanx consisted of about 16,000 men. Polybius, the historian, describes thus: "It was a square of pikemen, consisting sixteen in rank and 500 in depth; the soldiers stood so close together that the pikes of the fifth rank extended three feet beyond the front; the rest, whose pikes were not serviceable owing to their distance from the front, couched them upon the shoulders of those that stood before them, and so locking them together in file, pressed forward to support and push on the former rank, by which means the assault was rendered more violent and irresistible." The word phalanx is likewise used for any combination of people organized to act with firmness and unanimity.

ON SUCCESS STREET

OR

TWO AND TWO MAKE TWENTY-TWO

By ED KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER V.

A FAST WHIRL.

He could not leave, however, until he had shaken hands all around.

"Don't dare forget that you've promised to call on me this afternoon," whispered Bess. "If possible, I am more interested than ever in the doers of such rousing deeds as yours!"

At last Jack Thurston got away from the great house and went trudging rapidly down the driveway. Utterly happy, he felt as if trading on air.

"The thing couldn't have gone through better," he told himself exultantly. "My, how easy it was! Jack, my boy, there'll be a big, bunchy reward—maybe. But you mustn't forget, old fellow, that some people suffer from shrinkage in their gratitude after they've slept over the matter!"

As he turned out of the dark driveway at the gate Jack was confronted with dazing suddenness by a baulking, powerful-looking fellow.

His steadily-gripped revolver stared straight in the boy's face.

"I've been waitin' fer ye!" clicked the fellow in deadly coolness. "Ye turned my side partner over to the bulls. They hain't got me, but I've got you! Lebbe ye've heard of me. I'm Dandy Jim, that got here too late for anything but squaring my side partner's bills."

"Up with yer hands!" ordered Dandy Jim, as Jack, somewhat in a daze with the suddenness of his fate, stood staring at the captured yeggman's partner.

Jack put his hands up about as high as he could get them, and as promptly as he knew how.

There was something in Dandy Jim's eyes that forebade hesitation and warned against argument. "Now, you march!" ordered the fellow. "Straight ahead!" snarled this other yegg. "I could kill ye, of course, but I may have something else in mind. But tricks are out of yer line for the rest of the night, kid!"

Jack stepped along briskly as soon as the direction in which he was to go had been mentioned by his captor.

The march took them presently into a field, across

that to a stretch of woods, and hence on out on a hillside.

Below ran a river. Here, near the hill's crest, lay an irregular line of drain pipes, placed there for the building of a new sewer.

"Now, you lay down there!" ordered Dandy Jim, indicating a spot beside one of the drain pipes.

"What—" began Jack.

"It ain't no time to talk!" sneered the yegg. "And this ain't the place, neither!"

Surely not the place to disobey any orders! For this spot appeared to be at least half a mile from any house, and the time was still in the dead of night.

Still under cover of that big, menacing revolver, Jack lay down on the ground, his hands resting on the earth above his head.

Dandy Jim bent down, knotting one end of a long, thick cord around the boy's ankles.

The other end of this cord he tied around a stone.

Stepping over to the drain-pipe, the yegg threw the stone through.

"Now, get into that pipe," ordered Dandy Jim, lifting the boy, and shoving his feet first into the pipe.

It was a tight, snug fit, but the fellow managed to wedge the boy inside the pipe, until only his shoulders and head remained outside.

Yet Jack kept silent, for an instinct warned him that any interference with this grim scoundrel would be met by swift punishment.

Dandy Jim brought the cord back over the outside of the pipe, using the further end to tie the boy's wrists along the top of the pipe.

"Now, I reckon ye're pretty snugly tied," chuckled Dandy Jim, sitting down on top of the pipe to leer at the boy.

"Can I talk a bit now?" asked Jack, mildly.

"If ye're quick and short about it!"

"Now that you've got me tied up in this infernal shape, what do you mean to do with me?"

"Goin' t' leave ye right there in the pipe," announced Dandy Jim.

That didn't sound so badly. Jack almost felt like breathing again.

"If my pal was here," went on the yegg, "he'd say a hole in the ground, an' a pine box for yours."

But him and me does things different. I take milder measures. Ready for your ride?"

"My ride?" queried Jack in sudden dread.

Dropping his revolver into a pocket, Dandy Jim bent over, bracing his hands against the iron pipe. Shove!

"For heaven's sake, don't!" pleaded Jack, piteously, as the pipe began to roll.

"Got an idea where the ride ends, have ye?" chuckled Dandy Jim, giving the pipe another turn.

Jack's face was now in the dirt.

The river! This brute was going to roll him, fast in the pipe as he was, down into the water.

Sinking in an instant, Jack knew well how many minutes of tortured life there would be left for him.

"Don't! Don't do it!" screamed the boy.

"Scares ye, does it?" jeered the yegg.

"Yes, it's awful! In heaven's name, don't!"

"Cheer up!" soothed the fellow. "It'll soon be over!"

He bent to give another hard shove against the pipe.

Gr-r-r-r! There was a swift rush of feet. Ere Dandy Jim could straighten up and whirl about, he felt himself seized from behind and thrown.

A man, fighting like a fiend, was on top of him. A bulldog held Dandy Jim by the throat, growling, snarling, panting viciously.

"Better stop all yer antics!" warned a voice, the very sound of which made Jack Thornton throw with joy.

It was Bob Evans, the dog-trader, whom he had befriended.

"Yer gun is in this pocket, ain't it?" demanded Bob, coolly, as he reached for the weapon. "Don't stir, or my pup will bite your windpipe, I'm afraid."

Evans coolly possessed himself of the revolver, then stood up.

"Yegg," he announced, "it'll be wise for ye to stay where ye are. If ye don't, Towser 'll chew ye to pieces. He's a fighting dog, with a record, and he often gets ugly."

Then, without waiting to see whether Dandy Jim would obey, but keeping the revolver in one hand, Bob Evans untied Jack and helped him out of the drain-pipe.

"Right glad to help ye, Mr. Thurston," announced Evans, holding out a dirty hand almost shyly, and Jack pounced upon it.

"Now, if ye say so, Mr. Thurston, we'll put Mr. Yegg in the same place he had you!"

"Just the idea," Jack agreed, eagerly. "Only we won't try to roll him into the water."

"See here, gents," whined Dandy Jim, still lying quiet under the clutch of the dog's teeth, "ye can make a better deal by letting me go."

"Don't believe it," uttered Evans. "Howsumever, that's for Mr. Thurston to say. He's the boss."

"If I am," uttered Jack, "then I vote for tying Dandy Jim in the drain pipe without loss of a second."

Cowed by the bulldog more than by the gun, Dan-

dy Jim crawled into the drainpipe, and was spee made fast.

Now Jack turned upon the dog-trader.

"Evans, how on earth did you ever happen to here at the right moment?" our hero questione eagerly.

"Asleep in them bushes over there," grinned dog-trader, pointing to a near-by clump.

"Surely you've got a home? If not, you have some money."

"Oh, I'm a good deal of a hobo," Evans confes "Specially at this time o' the year. I bought f setter pups outer that money ye made for me, I'm on my travels to sell 'em. Towser is the I leave at home most times. I brought him with this trip—and glad I did. Now, what we goin do with this chap?"

"I think," answered Jack, "that the best th will be to get him to the station-house."

"All right, then," nodded Evans. "I'm off the cops. Here, Mr. Thurston, ye may want gun, and I'll leave Towser to watch, too."

Evans was off and out of sight in no time.

Jack stood looking at the disconcerted yegg.

"Tables turn quickly sometimes, don't they?" boy asked.

"Ye'd better let me go!" warned Dandy J threateningly. "It'll be money in yer pocket, years added to yer life."

"I'm afraid I don't believe you," smiled Ja "Such fellows as you and your pal are best beh the bars. It's safer for all honest folks, myself cluded."

"Kid, have ye any idea how the yeggs stand ba ed together? Yer name will be passed around am the boys until there won't be a county in the wh U. S. that ye'll be safe in!"

"I'll take a chance," murmured Thurston, indiferently. Then, suddenly he started forward, utt'ing a cry of

"Gracious! That won't do!"

For Towser, nosing around at one side of drain-pipe at the ticklish crest of that slope, had it rolling enough to start it down the hillside towat the water.

"Be quick, kid!" gasped Dandy Jim.

Jack sprang forward to seize one end of the pi

G-r-r-r-r! It was Towser, left on guard, faith to his trust.

"The dog won't let me touch it!" groaned Ja trotting after the slowly rolling pipe.

"Stop it, I tell ye!" frothed Dandy Jim, wild w terror.

"But the dog——"

"Never mind if ye do get bit! Are you going see me drown, helpless as I am? Never mind dog, I tell ye!"

But Jack, eyeing the bulldog's bristling rows teeth directly between himself and the rolling pi did mind.

(To be continued.)

INTERESTING TOPICS

WIRING AN ARMY CANTONMENT.

Some idea of the magnitude of the new National Army cantonments has been given from time to time, but thus far no mention has been made of the electrical work involved. It is therefore of interest to note that in the case of Camp Travis in Texas about 275 miles of copper wire were required, largely for overhead outside equipment. The interior wiring called for 22,000 electric lamps, 11,000 porcelain receptacles and 11,000 rosettes.

HEAVY SNOWSTORMS IN JAPAN.

Japan has suffered from unusually heavy snowfall this winter—especially in the northern part of the empire. In the Hokuriku districts snow fell to a depth of nearly six feet; in the city of Fukui the storm was even more severe. At Imasho snow was six feet deep on December 25; and in the neighboring town of Ono it attained a depth of eight feet. Avalanches of snow occurred at four places in the Nomi district, Ishikawa prefecture. Many workmen belonging to the Okoya mines live in temporary houses and ten of them were buried under the snow. Only five men were rescued alive. On subsequent days other snow slides occurred, attending by additional loss of life.

A train from Naoyetsu was stalled all night near Yuzen station. Before rescue came the snow had completely covered cars and engine. All passengers were saved. Snow fell at Takaoka for ten days and in mountain districts was ten feet deep.

WORD WILL TURN OUT A CHASER EVERY DAY.

Production plans for the navy's new anti-submarine craft contemplate the delivery of a finished boat every day. The first vessel has already been started in the fabricating shops at the Ford plant at Detroit.

Materials that go into construction are fed into the end of the plants as rapidly as it is planned to produce the completed product at the other. The whole number of boats contracted for will be under production simultaneously at one stage.

The boats will all be launched in Lake Michigan and brought to sea via the canal system and inland waterways. They will measure 200 feet and displace about 5 tons.

While the boats do not represent anything strikingly new in submarine warfare, they will be armed and equipped in such a way as to effect a decided improvement in the patrol service.

BRITISH AVIATORS GET 10-YEAR TERMS.

Two captured British airmen, the *Tageszeitung* of Berlin says, have been sentenced by a German

court-martial to ten years' imprisonment for dropping a hostile proclamation in Germany.

Reprisals are demanded by the daily *Mail* for the action of the German military authorities in sentencing two British airmen to ten years' imprisonment for dropping leaflets in Germany. The newspaper, which features the story to the exclusion of most other news, says:

"The enemy is carrying out the threat published after the report that a million copies of President Wilson's declaration of peace terms would be dropped from airplanes in Germany. The Germans first began to drop propaganda leaflets in the Allied lines more than three years ago. The practice helped to wreck Russia and cause the disastrous Italian retreat."

The *Daily Mail* wants the reprisals to take the form of putting German officers and prisoners on the same rations and living conditions as British prisoners undergo in Germany.

"DON'TS" FOR USE WITH THE CHINESE.

Here are a few "don'ts" for persons doing business with Chinese. They are selected from a long list published by *Millard's Review*:

Don't use the word "Chinaman." Don't say "Chink," unless you are trying to make enemies.

Don't imagine that all Chinese women bind their feet or that all Chinese men wear queues. Modern Chinese are discarding these things, just as modern American women are ceasing to wear "hobble skirts" and American men to wear "peg-top" trousers.

Don't ask your Chinese friend whether he eats rats and dogs. It will please him just about as much as it would please an American to ask him if he ate snakes and toad frogs.

Don't try to make persons believe you know all about China just because you have visited Chinatown in San Francisco, Shanghai or Hongkong. They are no more like the real China than the east side in New York is like America.

Don't expect all Chinese to be honest any more than you expect all Americans to be honest.

Don't think that because one or two Chinese in your city operate laundries all Chinese in China are engaged in the same kind of business.

Don't try to purchase "chop suey" in China. It's a dish prepared by Chinese in America for American consumption and is unknown in China.

Don't become discouraged at China's struggles in establishing a permanent centralized Government. After some thousands of years of absolutism it isn't possible to organize a modern democracy in six years. Remember that it required several years between 1776 and 1865 for the American Nation to really establish itself.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

NEW YORK, MARCH 8, 1918.

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166 West 23d St., New York

GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

Everett Newcomb, an eleven-year-old farm boy, of Monona, Iowa, walked barefoot in his nightgown from his home to town, one mile, asleep, and was none the worse for the experience when awakened.

Walter Markline, of Reading, Pa., arrested for robbing a half-dozen coal offices, pleaded guilty to the offense and was sent to the Spring City Institution for Feeble-Minded, from which institution he escaped a few days before committing these robberies.

Rural Policeman Paysinger went out in the Mallery portion of Mulline, Ga., and failing to find the negroes for whom he went in search he resolved not to return empty handed, so he came down upon a large rattlesnake and dealt it a death blow. The rattler was fifty-six inches long and had twelve rattles.

A six-foot black snake fell from the belfry of the Riverton (Md.) Methodist Church onto the shoulders of Benjamin F. Kennerly, the sexton, while he was ringing the bell. After a lively chase the snake was cornered in the church auditorium and killed. It evidently had made its home in the belfry and fed on birds which roost there.

During a severe storm that swept over Lake Michigan a large number of wild geese were sighted. The largest flock was seen at Twin River Point lighthouse. The flock consisted of more than 300 geese. The geese were confused by the flash of the light and broke the tower glass, one-half inch thick. One of the geese killed in the impact with the tower glass weighed over five pounds.

The Secretary of War has decided with reference to the disposition of liquor confiscated in many parts of the United States, that it will not be practicable for the War Department to utilize it. For medical purposes only relatively small quantities of very

select grades of whisky are utilized. It will not be practicable for the Medical Department to store over the large quantities of all kinds of liquor to obtain the small quantity of satisfactory whisky which would be of use to it. The Ordnance Department, after consulting with the Chief of the Materials Division of the War Industries Board (Mr. Summers), and the chief chemist of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, has come to the conclusion that the use of this alcoholic liquor by that department is not practicable. The Ordnance Department states that for the manufacture of smoke powder very pure alcohol is needed, and that redistillation of ordinary commercial intoxicating liquors might lead to the introduction of impurities in the redistilled alcohol which would injuriously affect the powder manufactured with the use of such alcohol. The Ordnance Department cannot afford to take the risk of producing poor powder for the sake of conserving this confiscated liquor.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

She—There seems to be a doubt whether kissing is proper or not. He—Let's put our heads together and consider.

Visitor—I hear you have been very ill, Nettie. Do you suffer much? Nettie (aged five)—Yes, ma'am. I enjoyed an awful lot of pain.

Mrs. Hoyle—My husband had \$100,000 when he married him. Mrs. Doyle—How much has he now? Mrs. Hoyle—Oh, he has most of the ciphers left.

Muffit—Hello, old chap! How are you feeling today? Weeks—Oh, I'm improving slowly—very slowly. Muffit—That's good! I'm delighted to hear

"Why are you always quarreling with me?" "I know you need not get angry. Just explain to her in a gentle tone where she is wrong." "But she is never wrong."

"Just my luck," wailed the woman. "Here is a chance to send letters to the British Isles for less than half price, and I don't know a soul in England to write to."

"John," said a business man to his Sicilian fruit vendor, "why did you leave Sicily?" "My country," answered John, "ten-cent a day. This country has ten-cent cigar."

"De Riter has had a novel published, I hear." "Yes. It's called 'Pygmalion,' and it's having a remarkable sale in Chicago." "Why in Chicago particularly?" "Well, I believe the people there were misled by the first syllable. They thought the book had something to do with their great home industry."

AN ARIZONA ROMANCE

By Kit Clyde

"There comes Mountain Joe on his pony," said my friend, Colonel Fleance Fitz Roy, as we were seated in the shade of a spreading mulberry, in the Grand Canyon of Tucson.

The person referred to was a handsome-looking man of perhaps thirty-five, somewhat above the medium height, of graceful carriage, and agile appearance.

He was armed with a half-carbine, half-navy revolver, that hung in a belt by his left side, and was dressed in a buckskin suit.

"Mountain Joe, as you call him, colonel, seems to be rather a fine specimen of the frontiersman, but I don't see anything remarkable about his pony, to which you particularly refer."

"Thereby hangs a tale, which I will unfold if you like listening to it."

"Go on—tell it by all means."

"Mountain Joe, as he is called, was born somewhere in the Eastern States, and, infatuated with Indian stories he had read, ran away from his parents and came to the Southwest.

"But he has had some hard knocks since, and the hardest were received in earning that pony, or rather five dollars' worth of it.

"You see, a few years ago old Senor Romuldo, whose ranch lies out along the Pinto road, owned that pony and one of the loveliest daughters in all these parts.

"He was immensely wealthy, and owned several valuable mines, and there was no telling how much gold and silver bullion he had stored away.

"Now, all the young fellows around here were crazy after the girl Inez, but Joe set his heart on the pony, and wanted to buy it.

"He is a fellow who always had his own way, and is a blessed good thing that his head is always right, otherwise somebody would get into trouble.

"But when Joe tried to buy the pony, everybody thought he was balked for once.

"The senor asked sixty-five dollars, and wanted Romuldo to trust him for the rest of it till he would come from a hunting expedition.

"This the old Spanish curmudgeon refused to do, and Joe vainly appealed to his friends to loan him the other five-spot.

"Failing, he got mad, and swore he would not live in such a community.

"One day he left, and was not heard from for a year.

"In the meantime, a band of Kickapoo Indians swooped down upon Romuldo's ranch, during his absence in town, ran off his stock, and carried the pretty Inez away into their mountain fastnesses.

"Several parties went out in search of the captive, only to be ambushed and whipped.

"Then it was that Senor Romuldo began to bewail

the absence of Mountain Joe, for everybody had faith that he could have rescued the lovely Inez from the dreadful state in store for her.

"Finally, just as the unhappy Spaniard was giving up in despair, Joe suddenly put in an appearance.

"If you will recover my child," said Romuldo, "I will give you a million dollars. You may have half my property, and whatever else you ask."

"I'm not particular about the reward," said Joe, "but I'll try and rescue the girl."

"And then he set about making preparations for the undertaking.

"Several gallant fellows volunteered to go with him, but he declined their services.

"He oiled up that overgrown revolver of his, stowed away about ten pounds of jerked meat in his clothes, and, taking the trail of the Kickapoos, set out early in the morning, and followed it all day cautiously; and by night was far up in the mountain.

"The next day near noon, as he reached the brow of an immense precipice, the redskins opened upon him in the rear.

"He was completely trapped.

"All means of retreat were cut off, and there was death both before and behind him.

"But Joe made up his mind to die game.

"Dodging behind a rock, he opened with his shooting iron, and made it lively for the ambushers.

"Every shot told, and soon a dozen dead Indians were stretched out on the mountain-top.

"But their comrades were undaunted, and nearly one hundred of them made a rush to seize him.

"He had already killed twenty-six of them, but he saw that he must soon be overpowered.

"Flight was impossible, and preferring to kill himself rather than be tortured by the Indians, he rushed to the precipice, fully two thousand feet high, and leaped boldly into space.

"But during his fearful descent he did not lose his presence of mind.

"He was going down near the face of the rocks, and observed that stunted pines and hemlocks grew out of the frequent crevices.

"He began grasping at the tops of them, which first bent and then broke, but he found that he was breaking the force of his fall.

"For the last five hundred feet the bushes were thick, and Joe was soon going down, dropping from one to the other in perfect safety.

"At last he reached the bottom, suffering from a few bruises and several rather serious wounds received in the contest with the Indians overhead.

"Just as he was congratulating himself upon his wonderful escape another pack of red devils broke from the chaparral and opened fire.

"Another hand-to-hand contest took place, and Joe killed nine of his enemies.

"He then started to run along the base of the cliff, when on a sudden the earth gave way under him, and he fell into a deep fissure.

"The Indians were immediately upon him and fired two or three volleys down the hole, and then covered it up with immense boulders.

"Joe had fallen some twenty feet, and realizing the danger from shots from above, got under the shelving of the rock, and thus avoided the balls.

"The Indians, supposing him dead, made no further investigations.

"Realizing his desperate situation, Joe set about extricating himself, and found that he was in a vast cave with a large number of ramifications.

"In the midst of pitchy darkness he began his exploration, which continued for four or five days, but which seemed to him as many years.

"The jerked meat satisfied the cravings of his appetite, and he found plenty of pure water to drink.

"At last he gave up, and lay down to die.

"Listening intently, he heard what seemed like human voices, and this once more gave him heart.

"Crawling in the direction from which the sounds came, he at length reached a point from which he was able to look into a vast rotunda, fitted up in barbaric splendor, and lighted with pine knots and sputtering lamps.

"There, reclining on a couch of bear skins, he beheld Inez Romuldo talking with an old Indian squaw, who apparently was her jailer.

"At length the old hag withdrew in an opposite direction, and Joe speedily made his presence known to the fair captive.

"A hurried consultation followed, and the whole situation was taken in.

"Inez explained that she was held a prisoner by the chief of the tribe of Red Eagle, who was determined she should marry him.

"The entrance to the cave was narrow and well concealed, and its existence was known only to a few of the Indians.

"They still swarmed in the mountains, but in two weeks were going south for a raid upon the settlements, and only a small guard were to be left in the cave.

"All this Inez hurriedly explained to Joe, and it was agreed that he was to lie concealed in the unexplored portions of the cave to the rear, recover from his wounds, and wait till the Indians left, before attempting a rescue, while Inez was to furnish him with provisions from her own allowance.

"The chief, Red Eagle, in the meantime treated her with distinguished consideration, offering her no indignities, and ordering that she should have whatever she called for.

"After three weeks of weary waiting, Inez learned from the old woman that Red Eagle and his braves had gone south, and that four braves had been left to guard her night and day.

"They took up their places in the far corner of the great hall, and Mountain Joe waited impatiently until they should go to sleep.

"Day and night were the same in the cave, but finally the Indian braves stretched themselves out one after the other to sleep.

"That sleep was their last, for four shots from Joe's revolving carbine fired in rapid succession killed them all before either was aware of his danger.

"The old woman was forced to guide them to the entrance of the cave, which was found after many tortuous windings, and Inez and Joe emerged from their living tomb just before sunrise.

"Joe then saw that he had passed entirely through the mountain.

"Romuldo and his friends had long given them both up for dead, and their feelings may be better imagined than described when they returned safe and sound after their miraculous adventures.

"Ever since then Joe has ridden that pony, and has been perfectly happy."

"But you don't mean to tell me, colonel, that you got no other reward than that little miserable pony of horseflesh? He married Inez, of course?"

"That's the way the story writers would have things," said the colonel, "but they never deal in facts, as I have done. The senor was as good as his word, and got a surveyor to divide the ranch into two equal parts, and showed Joe about fifty cartloads of gold and silver bullion as his share."

"'No, sir,' said Joe, 'I want none of these. I want that sorrel pony. Here are the sixty dollars, I want to know if you will trust me for the other five dollars?'"

"'I'll give you the pony and anything else you want,' said the senor. 'You deserve anything you will ask for.'

"But with all that the senor could do or say, he made him take the sixty dollars, and let him have the pony with five dollars due on it."

"Well, that is the most unnatural ending to a wonderfully romantic story I ever heard. Col. Fane Fane, there is something wrong with the sentiment and civilization of Tucson."

"Now, don't deceive yourself there again," said the colonel. "Mountain Joe and Inez Romuldo are to be married next week, and we will both go to the wedding."

TIGER SKIN FOR ROOSEVELT.

Tiger hunting is the latest pastime devised by Japanese narikin, or war millionaires, to relieve them of their surplus wealth. As a result the skin of a big Korean tiger will soon be on the way to Col. Theodore Roosevelt.

Tadasaburo Yamamoto, a Japanese narikin, has just returned from a lavish hunting expedition into the wilds of Korea. The bag consisted of tigers, leopards, bears, wild goats, wild boars and deer. The hide of the largest tiger, which announces Mr. Yamamoto, will be offered to Col. Roosevelt.

Upon his return to Tokio the narikin gave a dinner, at which his friends feasted upon the meat of the jungle beast, not, however, until after the toughness and original tiger aroma had been removed by a week's process of pickling.

FROM ALL POINTS

REAL GOLD BRICK LANDS MAN IN JAIL.

Days and nights of diligent search into the past life of Charles Johnson, of Los Angeles, Cal., the man who was arrested by the police when he tried to sell a real gold brick, resulted in his being identified as one of the most wanted burglars in the United States, the officers say.

The discovery of a platinum ring setting in the gold brick caused Johnson's arrest.

The gold had been melted and formed into a brick, but the platinum had resisted the heat and retained its original form.

When Johnson was questioned about how the gold came into his possession he could not offer satisfactory answers, and was held by the police pending further investigation.

CALIFORNIA'S FAMOUS ORANGE TREE DYING.

A battle for the life of Southern California's most famous tree began the other day, with the noted citrus culture experts of the world on the firing line. After bearing the first navel oranges ever grown in the United States and being the parent of groves producing \$67,000,000 in choice fruit annually, the tree at the head of Magnolia avenue in Riverside is believed to be dying.

A. D. Shamel, of the United States experimental station, Dr. H. J. Webber, of the University of California horticultural department, and consulting experts are making every effort to diagnose the disease that threatens death to the pioneer among the millions of citrus trees now spread over the State.

The tree was planted in 1873 by Mrs. C. L. Tibbets, who obtained it from the Government horticultural gardens at Washington. It came originally from Bahia, Brazil. The variety of fruit was named Washington navel, in honor of the national capital.

MARKET FOR MOONSHINERS.

Even the moonshiners have caught the profiteering fever. The moonshiner is operating in defiance of the Reed amendment, and that is sufficient justification, in his opinion, for a revision of the moonshine tariff upward. Travelers from sections of the state where this industry flourishes say that those who get on the trail have no trouble in securing a supply—if they have the money. The price of the stuff is delivered at the still or at some secret selling point named by the 'shiner, is \$10 a gallon. If the moonshiner has been put to the trouble of getting it outside his prescribed limits, and in consequence has to run some risk, he charges \$12 a gallon. As a general thing the "runs" are made to fill orders in sight. If the 'shiner has got a ten-gallon crowd on his string he will make a run over-

night and dispose of the stuff direct from the still within 25 hours. Nobody can get moonshine liquor that has the "age" to it. Hot from the still it carries the traditional bite of the adder and kick of the mule, and concentrated lye is said to be a mild tonic in comparison to it. This explains why the men who drink it are regarded as meaner than the men who make it. The North Carolina moonshiner is too respectable a gentleman to drink the stuff he makes. The doctor may take his own physic, but the moonshiner places a higher value than that on his own life. He makes his pizen to sell.

AMERICAN WOMEN IN INDUSTRIAL WAR WORK.

There are approximately 1,266,061 women in the United States engaged in industrial work which is either directly or indirectly necessary to carry on the war, according to an estimate based on surveys made in 15 States for the National League of Women's Service by Miss Marie L. Obenauer with the sanction and assistance of the Department of Labor.

"These million and more women," said Miss Obenauer, "are in the front rank of the industrial army of defense. They are the important women of the Nation. Bands do not play in their honor; they do not wear picturesque uniforms; yet in the business of winning the war it is as necessary to protect their working efficiency as to safeguard the fighting efficiency of the men on the firing line."

The figures given are conservative, Miss Obenauer states. It is estimated that the normal increase in the number of women employed in the industries surveyed since the census of 1910 was 20 per cent. There were approximately 3,500 women employed in the munition factories in 1910. The number is now 100,000, according to Miss Obenauer. This again, she states, is a conservative estimate. She includes aeroplanes when speaking of munition factories.

"The thing our survey impressed upon us," said Miss Obenauer, "is that woman can not escape her world-old job—the job of feeding and clothing. She finds this to be her job outside as well as in the home if she is to be an important factor in winning the war.

"She longs to do her bit in picturesque fashion, but she is needed most for the work which she considers more or less drudgery because it has been her work through the ages. The women employed in the industries necessary to the winning of the war are, for the most part, weaving, sewing, and preserving food."

Miss Obenauer suggests, as a way to help relieve the clothing shortage in the Army, the establishment of community sewing places under Government supervision.

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

PAPER IN POCKET STOPS BULLET.

William Mincer, a citizen of Spencer, Ia., was shot in the shoulder by Charles Rogers of Estherville. Another bullet hit the paper in his hip pocket and was stopped. The trouble occurred over a land deal and a judgment obtained by Mincer against Rogers.

WORLD'S SHIP LOSS IN WAR 9 PER CENT.

The German newspapers assert that in the first year of the unrestricted submarine warfare 9,000,000 tons of Allied and neutral shipping were sunk and that only 4,000,000 tons have been built to offset this.

As showing how unreliable is the information which the German authorities give out, the Associated Press is authorized to state that the claim put forward exaggerated the actual tonnage lost by more than 50 per cent. The total net loss of the world's ocean-going tonnage since the outbreak of the war, including the losses by marine risk as well as by enemy action, and allowing for enemy tonnage captured, amounts to less than 3,000,000, or 9 per cent. of the tonnage available at the outbreak of the war.

BIG DEMAND FOR BUTTONS DUE TO GOVERNMENT NEEDS.

The Government demand for large quantities of buttons has led American manufacturers to attempt to purchase back the stock of wholesalers and jobbers of buttons at the price asked the cutting-up trade in order to fill Government requisitions promptly. The figures furnished by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce show also that there has been a greater demand abroad for buttons made in this country. The exports of buttons and parts from the United States for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1917, amounted to \$1,982,104, as compared with \$1,902,556 in 1916 and \$654,372 in 1914.

Buttons, especially the larger sizes, 40 to 55 line, such as are used on overcoats, of metal, horn, or vegetable ivory, are now much wanted. The demand has not only absorbed the American product, but has apparently stimulated the import trade in buttons.

SPARROW PIE FOUND TO BE DELICIOUS.

Blackbird pies have been heralded in song and fable since the beginning of time, but no hero was ever more greatly surprised when confronted by the four and twenty blackbirds of legendary fame than were the home economics experts of the Food Administration when confronted with sparrow pie the other day when guests at a luncheon served them in Washington by the Philadelphia Ledger. The

birds were caught in the suburbs of Philadelphia by James Hunt, Sir., of that city, who has started a movement to encourage the catching and eating of English sparrows in this country.

Sparrow pie is a staple English dainty. In this country English sparrows are considered a pest because they destroy grain, and therefore their bodies are made clean, wholesome food. Special traps have been devised by which several dozen sparrows may be caught at once, either by day or night. Sparrows are easily prepared for cooking by a simple cleaning process of cutting away the necks and legs and peeling the skin off, feathers and all.

WAR COSTING U. S. \$24,000,000 A DAY.

Ten months of the war have cost the United States about \$7,100,000,000—at the rate of nearly \$200,000 a day.

More than half of this huge sum, or \$4,121,000 has been paid as loans to the Allies and the balance, about \$3,000,000,000, represents America's outlay for its own war purposes, exclusive of more than \$600,000,000 for ordinary governmental expenses.

The war's toll in money is increasing at the rate of more than \$100,000,000 a month, and indications now are that the two remaining months of the Nation's first year as a belligerent will run its war bill to nearly \$10,000,000,000, of which \$5,000,000 will be for Allied loans and about the same amount for the army, navy, Shipping Board and other war agencies.

These figures were compiled the other day from the latest available Treasury figures.

NEW UNITED STATES STAMPS.

Thirty-seven new spaces in the stamp albums of coming years already are assured as a direct result of the status of the United States as a belligerent power. It is not customary for a nation to go to war without providing something of interest to philatelists. The South and Central American countries which have aligned themselves with the Entente have not yet issued war stamps, but it is expected that some or all of them eventually will do so.

The contributions of the United States in this respect are various. Most of them arise out of the war tax legislation enacted by Congress. Twenty-one documentary revenue labels soon made their appearance, ranging in values from one cent to \$1,000 for use on wills, deeds, conveyances and kindred legal papers. This practice was adopted by the Government in Civil War days, and resumption of it now will turn millions of dollars into the Nation's war coffers. The tax on playing cards was raised from two to seven cents, thus making a seven-cent revenue to displace the lower denomination.

SNAPPER CIGAR.

the real thing for the ~~real~~ grafted. If you smoke you must have met him. He is a few choice cigars in your pocket makes no bones about asking you for. You are all prepared for him this. How? Take one of these cigars snappers (which is so much like a real cigar are liable to smoke it yourself by mistake). Bend the spring back towards the bent end, and as you offer the cigar let the spring and the victim gets a sharp snap on the fingers. A sure cure for grafters. Price, by mail, ten cents postpaid or three for 25c.

BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE SPIDER WEB PUZZLE.

A very interesting little puzzle. It consists of a heavily nickel plated and brass ring. The object is to get the ring from the side to the center and back. This is very hard, but we give directions making it easy. Price, 10 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

FRANK SMITH,
283 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

CACHOO AND ITCH POWDER.

Itch powder, Cachoo and Bombs are inavailable, we cannot accept orders for less than One Dollar's worth of an assortment. They can be sent by express only, on which we will prepay the charges.

WOLFF Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

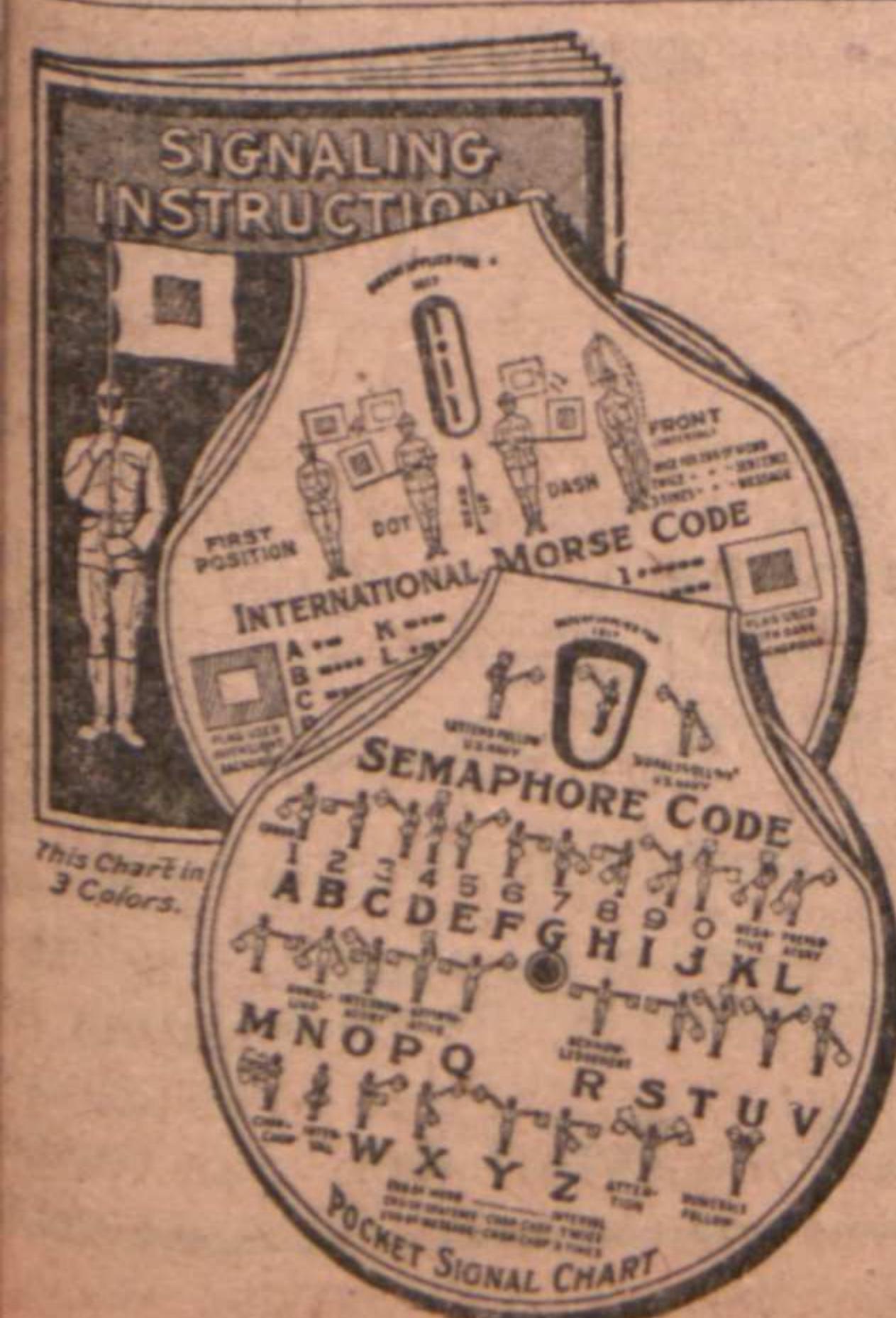
SCIENTIFIC MIND READING.

Wonderful! Startling! Scientific! You hand a friend a handsome set of cards on which are printed the names of the 28 United States Presidents. Ask him to secretly select a name and hold the card to his forehead and think of the name. Like a flash comes the answer "Lincoln, Washington," or whatever name he is thinking of. The more you repeat it the more puzzling it becomes. With our outfit you can do it anywhere, any time, with anybody. Startle our friends. Do it at the next party or at your club and be the lion of the evening. This was invented by a famous magician. Price, with complete set of cards and full instructions, 12 cents, mailed, postpaid. C. BEHR 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

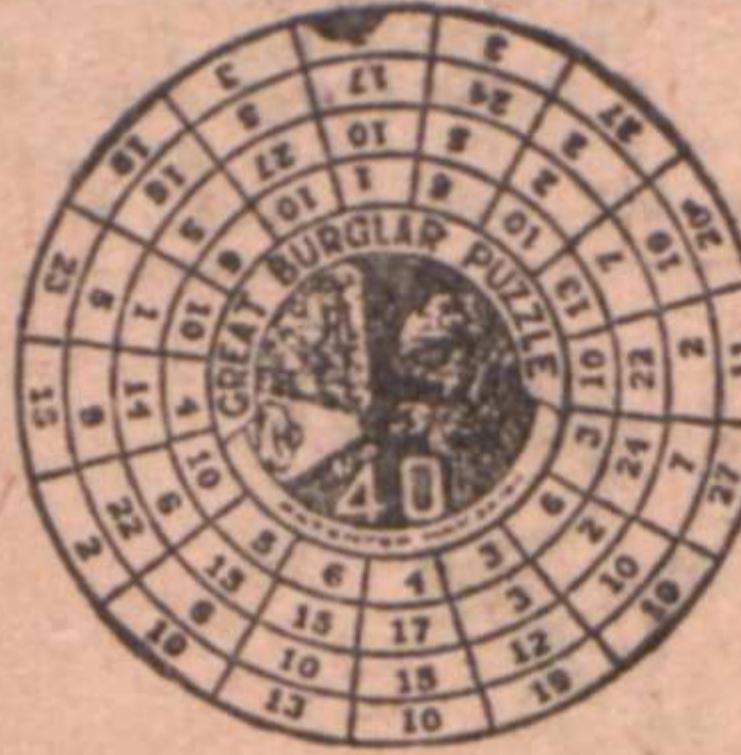
MAGIC LINR PUZZLE.

A number of rings. The scheme is to link them together just exactly the same way magicians link their hoops. It looks dead easy. But we defy anybody to do it unless they know the secret. Price 10c, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

**TOBACCO HABIT CONQUERED IN 3 DAYS**

I offer a genuine, guaranteed remedy for tobacco or snuff habit, in 72 hours. It is mild, pleasant, strengthening. Overcomes that peculiar nervousness and craving for cigarettes, cigars, pipe, chewing tobacco or snuff. One man in 10 can use tobacco without apparent injury; to the other 9 it is poisonous & seriously injurious to health in several ways, causing such disorders as nervous dyspepsia, sleeplessness, gas, belching, gnawing, or other uncomfortable sensation in stomach; constipation, headache, weak eyes, loss of vigor, red spots on skin, throat irritation, asthma, bronchitis, heart failure, lung trouble, catarrh, melancholy, neurasthenia, impotency, loss of memory and will power, impure (poisoned) blood, rheumatism, lameness, sciatica, neuritis, heartburn, torpid liver, loss of appetite, bad teeth, foul breath, enervation, lassitude, lack of ambition, falling out of hair, baldness, and many other disorders. It is unsafe and torturing to attempt to cure yourself of tobacco or snuff habit by sudden stopping—don't do it. The correct method is to eliminate the nicotine poison from the system, strengthen the weakened, irritated membranes and nerves and genuinely overcome the craving. You can quit tobacco and enjoy yourself a thousand times better while feeling always in robust health. My FREE book tells all about the wonderful 3 days Method. Inexpensive, reliable. Also Secret Method for conquering habit in another without his knowledge. Full particulars including my book on Tobacco and Snuff Habit mailed in plain wrapper, free. Don't delay. Keep this show to others. This adv. may not appear again. Mention if you smoke or chew. Address: EDWARD J. WOODS, 228 Y, Station F, New York, N. Y.

GREAT BURGLAR PUZZLE.

The latest and most fascinating puzzle ever placed on the market. Patented May 30. It consists of four revolving dials, each dial containing 18 figures. 64 figures in all. To open the safe these dials must be turned around until the figures in each of the 18 columns added together total 40. The puzzle is made on the plan of the combination lock on the large iron safes that open on a combination of figures. Persons have been known to sit up all night, so interested have they become trying to get each column to total 40. in this fascinating puzzle. With the printed key which we send with each puzzle the figures can be set in a few minutes so as to total 40 in each column.

Price 15 cents; mailed, postpaid.
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

JAPANESE MAGIC PAPER.

The latest, greatest and best little trick perfected by the ingenious Japanese is called Yaka Hula. It consists of two packages of specially prepared paper, one a sensitized medium, and the other a developing medium. The process of manufacture is a secret. By wetting a white sheet, and pressing a pink sheet on top of it, the white sheet will develop quaint photographic scenes, such as landscapes of Japan, portraits of Japanese characters, pictures of peculiar buildings, Gods, temples, etc. These pictures are replicas of actual photographs, and print up in a beautiful sepia brown color. Intensely interesting for both old and young. Price, 12c. per package, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

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With Booklet of Instructions
in accordance with

U.S. ARMY AND NAVY SYSTEMS, 1918

With this chart the authorized codes are quickly learned. Signals are read and verified immediately. Can be operated with one hand while the other writes.

For use by Boys' and Girls' Clubs, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Lone Scouts, Red Cross Societies, Schools, Y. M. C. A.s—besides Military, Naval and Patriotic Organizations, Enlisted Men, Camps, etc. We can make you very low rates in quantity. Write To-day!

The Booklet which goes with the Chart is endorsed by authorities as being the simplest, clearest treatise on signaling.

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